THE HISTORY AND ADVENTURES OF GIL BLAS OF SANTILLANE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

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The AUTHOR'S DECLARATION.

THere being ſome perſons who cannot read a book, without making vitious and ridiculous applications of the characters they find in it; I declare to thoſe malicious readers, that they will be in the wrong if they apply the portraits in this to particular perſons. I make this public confeſſion, that all I aimed at was to repreſent the life of man ſuch as it is. God forbid I ſhould have a deſign to mark out any perſon in particular. Let no reader therefore take that to himſelf which ſuits others as well as him: otherwiſe, as Phædrus ſays, he will make an unlucky diſcovery of his own character. *Stultè nudabit animi conſcientiam.*

There are phyſicians in Caſtile, as well as in France, whoſe method is to bleed their patients too much. The ſame vices, the ſame originals are every where to be met with. I own I have not always exactly imitated the manners of the Spaniards. And thoſe that know what diſorderly lives the players at Madrid lead, may blame me for not painting them in more lively colours; but I thought it proper to ſoften ſome parts of them, that they might be more conformable to our way of living in France.

GIL BLAS

TO THE

READER.

BEfore thou entereſt upon the ſtory of my life, hearken, kind reader, to the tale I am about to tell thee.

Two ſcholars going together from Pennafiel to Salamanca, and finding themſelves weary and faint, ſtopped by the ſide of a fountain which they came to in their way. As they were reſting themſelves there, they by chance ſpied a ſtone with ſome words written upon it, almoſt effaced by time, and the feet of the flocks that came to drink at that ſpring: they waſhed the dirt off the ſtone; and when they could read the words diſtinctly, they found this inſcription in the Caſtilian tongue: *Aqui eſt à encerrada el alma del Licenciado Pedro Garcias:* "The ſoul of the Li-" centiate Pedro Garcias is here incloſed." The youngeſt of the ſcholars, a briſk blunt boy, had no ſooner read the inſcription, but he laughed and cried, "The ſoul here inclo-" ſed—A ſoul incloſed; I would fain know " the author of ſuch a fooliſh epitaph." So ſaying, he got up and went away; while his companion, who had more judgment, ſaid to himſelf, "There muſt be ſome myſtery in it:

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"I will ſtay and ſee whether I can find it out." Accordingly he let the other ſcholar go before him; and when he was gone, he pulled out his knife and dug up the earth about the ſtone, which at laſt he removed, and found under it a leather purſe, which he opened. There were a hundred ducats in it, with a card, wherein was written in Latin to this effect. "Be thou my heir, thou who haſt wit enough "to find out the meaning of this inſcription, "and make a better uſe of my money than "I did." The ſcholar was overjoyed at this diſcovery, covered the place with the ſtone again, and proceeded to Salamanca with the ſoul of the Licentiate in his pocket.

Whoever thou art, kind reader, that art going to reſemble one or the other of thoſe two ſcholars; if thou readeſt my adventures without having regard to the moral inſtructions that are contained in them, this work will be of no uſe to thee; but if thou readeſt them with attention, thou wilt meet with the UTILE and the DULCE, according to the rule of Horace.

THE

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THE

THE HISTORY OF GIL BLAS DE SANTILLANE.

BOOK I.

CHAP. I.

Of Gil Blas's birth and education.

BLAS of Santillane, my father, having a long time borne arms for the ſervice of the Spaniſh monarchy, retired at laſt to the town he was born in, where he married a woman that could by no means be ſaid to be in the flower of her youth. At ten months end I came into the world; and they afterwards removed to Oviedo, where my mother ſerved a gentleman in the quality of a chambermaid, and my father in that of groom. As they had nothing to live upon but their wages, I ſhould have been in danger of a very indifferent education, if I had not had a ca-

non for my uncle. Imagine to yourſelf a little man of three foot and a half high, with a head ſunk into his ſhoulders: ſuch a one was this uncle of mine. He was a prieſt who minded nothing but good living, I mean good cheer; and his tithes, which were pretty conſiderable, furniſhed him with the means of doing it, according to his appetite.

He took me from a child, and had the care of breeding me up. My parts were ſo promiſing, that he reſolved to cultivate them. He bought me a horn-book, and undertook to teach me to read himſelf, which was no ſmall improvement of his own reading alſo; for by teaching me my letters, he recovered the knowledge of them, which he had loſt by long diſuſe; and thus in a little while he could run over his breviary very cleverly, which he could not do before. He would fain have taught me Latin too; it would have ſaved him ſome money in his pocket; but ah, poor Gil Perez! he knew not how many parts of ſpeech there were. He was perhaps (for I would not be too poſitive in aſſerting it) the moſt ignorant canon of all the chapter. I have been told, that he got his benefice, not by his learning, but by the favour of ſome nuns, for whom he had proved a diſcreet and ſucceſsful agent; and they had intereſt enough to get him admitted into orders, without paſſing through any examination. His ignorance obliged him to put me to ſchool. Accordingly he ſent me to Dr Sodiner, who had the character of the moſt able pedant of Oviedo. I made ſo good

uſe

uſe of his leſſons, that in five or ſix years time I underſtood ſomething of the Greek authors, and was tolerably well acquainted with the Latin. I applied myſelf alſo to logic, which helped me out at a pinch, when I was put to it for want of arguments, as it often happened to me, through an inordinate deſire of diſputation; which I was ſo fond of, that I frequently ſtopped people as they went along the ſtreets, whether I knew them or not, to propoſe arguments to them. I ſometimes met with ſome Iriſhmen, who loved diſputing as well as myſelf, and we made rare work of it. Lord, what grimaces! what geſtures! what contortions! fire ſparkled in our eyes, and we always foamed at the mouth: every one that ſaw us, ought to have taken us rather for madmen than philoſophers.

By this means I acquired the reputation of a learned perſon, and my uncle was overjoyed to find me ſo forward, hoping it would eaſe him of any farther expenſe about me. So, Gil Blas, ſays he to me one day, thou art out of thy childhood, it is time for thee to provide for thyſelf; thou art eighteen, and a notable lad: I think to ſend thee to the univerſity of Salamanca; thou canſt not fail of getting ſome employment or other there. I will give thee my mule, which is worth ten or twelve piſtoles, and put ſome ducats in thy pocket. Thou mayſt ſell the mule at Salamanca, and live upon the money till thou canſt get thee a place.

He could not have made me a more agree-

able propoſal; for I longed mightily to ſee the country: however I did not let him ſee it. I concealed my joy: and when we parted, I ſeemed to be ſo grieved at my leaving an uncle who had been ſo kind to me, that the good man was touched with it, and gave me more money than I ſhould have had of him, had he known the bottom of my ſoul. Before I departed, I took leave of my father and mother, who failed not to give me very good counſel: they admoniſhed me to pray for my uncle, to avoid ill company, and above all things to beware of wronging any body, and taking what was not my own. After a long harangue of this kind, they made me a preſent of their bleſſing, the only gift I had of them: I mounted my mule, and quitted Oviedo.

CHAP. II.

How he was alarmed as he was going to Penafler; what he did when he came thither, and with whom he ſupped.

BEing got out of town in the road to Penafler, maſter of my own actions, of a ſorry mule, and forty good ducats, beſides ſome reals which I had ſtole from my moſt honoured uncle; the firſt thing I did was to give my mule her head, and to go at what pace ſhe pleaſed: I threw the bridle on her neck, took the ducats out of my pocket, and told them over and over in my hat. I had never ſeen ſo much money in all my life, and I could not help telling it, and handling it. I ſuppoſe it might

night be about the twentieth time of telling, when my mule pricked up her ears, and ſtopped in the middle of the highway. I imagined ſhe was frighted, and looking to ſee what was the occaſion of it, I ſaw a hat on the ground, with a huge roſary upon it, and heard a lamentable voice pronouncing theſe words: "Have pity, Signior, on a poor crippled ſoldier: for the Lord's ſake throw ſome of "thoſe pieces into my hat: God will reward "you for it in the other world." Turning my head to the place from whence the voice came, I ſpied a kind of a ſoldier under a hedge ten yards off me. He held out a pole, which ſeemed to me to be as long as a pike, and rather intended for arms than for a ſupport. At ſight of this I fell into a panic, and did not know what to do. In the firſt place, I took care of my ducats, put them in my pocket, and pulled out ſome reals. I then approached the hat, which was diſpoſed to receive the charity of all frighted believers; I threw them into it one after another, to let the ſoldier ſee how generous I was. He was ſatisfied with my noble way of proceeding, and gave me as many bleſſings as I gave ſtrokes with my heel into my mule's ſides, to get him from him as faſt I could: but the curſed jade made not the greater ſpeed for it; ſhe had been ſo long uſed to go my uncle's ſlow pace, juſt one leg before the other, that ſhe had forgot what a gallop was.

I did not at all like this omen: I thought to myſelf, I am not got to Salamanca yet, and

ſomething worſe than this may befal me before I get thither: my uncle ſhould not have let me go by myſelf; but doubtleſs he did it to ſave charges, and not conſidered the riſk I run in travelling alone at my years. I therefore reſolved as ſoon as I came to Penafler to ſell my mule, and go by the carrier to Aſtorga, and ſo to Salamanca after the ſame manner. Though I had never been out of Oviedo, I knew the names of the towns I was to paſs through, having informed myſelf of them before my departure.

Being arrived at Penafler, I ſtopped at the gate of an inn, which made a pretty good appearance. I no ſooner alighted than the man of the houſe came and received me very civilly. He untied my portmanteau, put it upon his ſhoulders, and conducted me to my chamber: the hoſtler took my mule, and led it into the ſtable. My landlord was the moſt talkative perſon of all his fraternity, and whether there was occaſion for it or no, was very free to tell one all his private affairs. He was no leſs inquiſitive about thoſe that did not concern him. He told me his name was Andrea Corcuelo, that he had ſerved in the army many years as a ſerjeant, and had quitted the ſervice fifteen months before, to marry a young woman of Caſtropol, who, though ſhe was no beauty, did the buſineſs of the houſe well enough. He told me abundance of other things, which I was not very fond of hearing; and in return for ſo great confidence, he thought I could do no leſs than ſatisfy his demands who

I was, and whence I came. He would needs have me anſwer him article by article, accompanying every queſtion with a pauſe and a low bow, praying me to excuſe his curioſity, and that with ſo much reſpect, that I could not help ſatisfying it. This neceſſarily drew me into a long conference with him, and gave me an opportunity to talk of my deſign to diſpoſe of my mule, and go the reſt of my journey by the carrier. He highly approved of my reaſons, and repreſented to me the many ſad accidents I might be expoſed to on the road, telling me ſeveral diſmal ſtories of travellers, which he exaggerated and enlarged on ſo much, that I thought he would never have done. At laſt he came to the caſe, and ſaid, if I would ſell my mule, he knew an honeſt jobber who would buy it of me. I let him know I ſhould think myſelf mightily obliged for that piece of ſervice; and he went immediately to fetch my chapman.

He ſoon returned, and brought his man with him, whom he recommended for his honeſty: the mule was led out into the yard, and we three went to view it. My chapman examined it from head to foot, and made the hoſtler ride him up and down the yard, which did not at all add to the credit of the beaſt. The jobber found a hundred faults with it, and truly there was not much good to be ſaid of it; but if it had been the Pope's mule, the fellow would have had ſomething to ſay againſt it. He ſwore mine was good for nothing; and to convince me of the truth of what

what he ſaid, he obliged my landlord to vouch for it, who doubtleſs had his reaſons to ſay what the jobber would have him. The latter turning to me, ſaid gruffly, You would not impoſe ſuch a beaſt upon me for a good one, I hope; he is not worth driving home. After he and my hoſt had paſſed judgment upon my mule, I took it for granted that he was as bad as they made him to be. I therefore threw myſelf upon the honeſty of the jobber, and bid him give me for it what he thought in his conſcience it was worth. My man pretending to be a perſon of ſtrict honour, replied, that by referring it to his conſcience I had taken him by the weak ſide; and indeed I found it was not his ſtrongeſt: for inſtead of coming up to the value my uncle ſet upon it of ten or twelve piſtoles, he had the impudence to rate it at three ducats; which I took with as much joy as if I had gained by the bargain.

Having diſpoſed of my mule ſo advantageouſly, my hoſt carried me to a carrier, who was to ſet out next day to Aſtorga; the carrier ſaid he ſhould be going before day light, and that he would come and call me. We agreed for the price, as well for the mule he was to provide me, as for my maintenance on the road; and when that was done, I returned with Corcuelo to my inn. My landlord told me the hiſtory of the carrier by the way, and what the people ſaid of him there. He deafened me with his babbling, and I believe would have murdered me with it, if by good luck

luck a man who looked like a gentleman had not come and interrupted him. I left them together, and went towards my room, not dreaming that I was at all concerned in their converſation.

I called for ſupper, and it being a faſt-day, they accommodated me with ſome eggs: while they were getting them, I entered into diſcourſe with my landlady, whom I had not ſeen before. She was not over-handſome, but had ſuch a way with her, that if her huſband had not told me, I ſhould have gueſſed that ſhe knew how to do the buſineſs of his houſe. When my eggs were ready, I ſat down at table by myſelf; before I could put a bit into my mouth, in comes my hoſt, and brings in with him the man I ſpoke of, who took him off from his long tale to me about the muleteer. The gentleman had a ſword by his ſide, and was thirty years of age: he came up to me with a very ſolemn look, and accoſted me thus: Mr Scholar, I am informed you are Signior Gil Blas of Santillane, the ornament of Oviedo, and the flambeau of philoſophy. Is it poſſible that your ſcholarſhip ſhould be ſo deep, and that you are the perſon whoſe wit is ſo much talked of in this country? You do not know, continues he, addreſſing himſelf to my landlord and landlady, what a man you have in your houſe: he is a treaſure, and the eighth wonder of the world. He then turned to me, and taking me about the neck, Pardon, ſays he, young gentleman, pardon my tranſports,

tranſports, the ſight of you gives me ſo much joy, that I am not my own maſter.

I did not know what to ſay to him, in return for his extraordinary compliment; and beſides he held me ſo faſt, that I could hardly fetch breath. With much ado I got looſe of him, and replied, Signior, I did not think that any body knew my name at Penaſler. How, ſays he, not know your name? we keep a regiſter of all illuſtrious perſons within twenty leagues round us: you paſs for a prodigy, and I doubt not but one time or other Spain will be as proud of having produced you, as Greece was of having given birth to the ſeven wiſe men. Theſe words were accompanied with freſh embraces, which I was forced to undergo, though with the peril of being ſerved as Anteus was. Had I had ever ſo little experience, it would have been impoſſible for me to be bubbled by his hyperboles; I ſhould have ſmelt his extravagant flattery, and have found out that he was one of thoſe paraſites that are to be met with in all cities, ready to break in upon any ſtranger, and cram himſelf at his expenſe: but my youth and my vanity made me judge of him otherwiſe. I took him for a man of great honour and judgment, and invited him to ſup with me. With all my heart, cries he, I rejoice too much in my good fortune, in having met with the renowned Gil Blas of Santillane, not to take hold of ſo glorious an opportunity of enjoying his company, and having as much of it as I can. I have no great ſtomach, continued he, I will however

however eat a bit or two out of complaiſance. He then ſet himſelf down overagainſt me: a napkin was brought him, and a freſh ſupply of eggs, which he ſwallowed as faſt as if he had not ate in three days. That parcel was ſoon diſpatched, and then another and another; he all the while finding leiſure to overwhelm me with his elogies, not omitting my perſon, which I took very kindly of him, though it was not of a ſize to be the ſubject of panegyric. He drank often; ſometimes it was my health, ſometimes my father's and mother's, whoſe happineſs in having ſuch a ſon he could never enough admire. Every now and then he would fill up my glaſs, and urge me to pledge him in a bumper to ſuch agreeable toaſts. I was not backward in obliging him; and the wine and his flattery put me into ſo good a humour, that I was not ſatisfied with a ſupper of eggs, I muſt have ſome fiſh alſo for him. Signior Corcuelo, who no queſtion had an underſtanding with the paraſite, ſaid, he had an excellent trout in the houſe, but it would come dear, and was too nice a diſh for me. Too nice? ſaid my flatterer, raiſing his voice; you forget yourſelf, friend, can any thing be too nice for Signior Gil Blas de Santillane? he deſerves to be treated like a prince.

I was very glad that he took up my landlord ſo: I was going to do it myſelf; and when he had done, cried, "Bring your trout, "Sir, and don't you trouble yourſelf about "the niceneſs of it." That was what the hoſt

hoſt wanted. The trout was preſently got ready, and ſerved up to table. At the ſight of this new diſh I perceived the paraſite's eyes ſparkled with joy; and he ate of that with the ſame complacency that he diſpatched the eggs. At laſt he was forced to give over, for fear of an ill accident, having crammed himſelf up to the throat; and to finiſh the farce, he roſe from the table, ſaying, Signior Gil Blas, I am too well pleaſed with your entertainment, to leave you without giving you ſome important advice, which you ſeem to ſtand in need of. Beware hereafter of flattery; be upon your guard againſt men whom you have no knowledge of: you may find others who will, like me, impoſe upon your credulity, and perhaps carry the matter farther. Be not their cully, and do not take their word, if they tell you, you are the eighth wonder of the world. Saying this, he laughed in my face, and retired. I was as much out of countenance at having this trick put upon me as ever I was at the greateſt diſgraces that happened to me in the courſe of my life. I could not bear being ſo groſsly bubbled, or rather to have my pride ſo mortified. How, ſaid I to myſelf, has the traitor made a jeſt of me? he was ſo cloſe with my landlord, to carry on his plot againſt me: it was a contrivance between them. Ah poor Gil Blas, go hang thyſelf for ſhame of being made ſport of by ſuch raſcals. They will make a fine ſtory of it, which will ſoon get to Oviedo, and be a mighty honour to thee. Thy parents will

will doubtleſs repent that they took ſo much pains in inſtructing a dunce not to cheat any body. They ſhould ſurely have exhorted me not to be cheated myſelf. Thus, full of ſpite and ſhame, I locked myſelf up in my chamber, and went to bed, but I could not ſleep a wink: the muleteer came at break of day to tell me he ſtaid for me. I got up, and while I was dreſſing me, Corcuelo brought in his bill, where the trout was not forgotten. He not only charged every thing at his own prices, but I obſerved, when I paid him, the rogue grinned at the thought of my adventure. My reckoning being diſcharged, I went with my portmanteau to the carrier, giving a hearty curſe to the paraſite, my hoſt, and his inn.

CHAP. III.

Of a temptation that befel the muleteer on the road: what happened thereupon; and how Gil Blas fell out of the frying-pan into the fire.

I Was not the only perſon that travelled with the muleteer: there were two lads of Penaſler, a little quiriſter of Mondonedo, who went from place to place to ſing where they would hire him, and a young man of Aſtorga, who was returning home with a girl he had lately married at Verco. We were preſently acquainted, and told one another whence we came, and whither we were going. The bride, though ſhe was young, was ſo ugly, and ſo ſluttiſh, that I took no great

delight in looking upon her: nevertheleſs her youth and her ſize, which was not of the ſmalleſt, rendered her agreeable in the eyes of the muleteer, who reſolved to do his utmoſt to gain her good graces. He ſpent the day in contriving how to effect it, and adjourned the execution of it till night. Our muleteer reſted at Cacabelos, and put up at the firſt inn we came to, which was more in the country than in the town. The man of the houſe was, it ſeems, a diſcreet, complaiſant perſon, and at the muleteer's requeſt he ſhewed us to a room apart from the reſt of the inn, where we ordered ſupper to be brought us. When we had almoſt ſupped, the muleteer entered the room, and cried, "S'death, I am robbed: I had a hundred piſtoles in a leather-bag; I'll have them again, I warrant you. I am going to the magiſtrate of the town, who won't make it a jeſting matter, but will put every man of you to the torture, till you confeſs the crime, and reſtore the money." Saying this very ſeriouſly, he left us all in a terrible conſternation. We did not imagine it was a feint of his. We knew nothing of one another. I ſuſpected the quiriſter had done the feat, and perhaps he ſuſpected the ſame of me. We were not acquainted with the formalities practiſed on the like occaſions. We doubted not but we ſhould indeed be racked; and being alſo extremely terrified, we ſhifted every one for himſelf: ſome ran into the ſtreets, others into the garden: all of us endeavouring to ſave ourſelves by flight; and the young man

of

of Aſtorga, who was in as great a fright as any of us, made his eſcape, like another Æneas, not mattering what became of his wife. The muleteer, as I learned afterwards, was overjoyed that this ſtratagem ſucceeded ſo well, and went to brag of his artifice to the bride, intending to take hold of the opportunity it had given him. But this Lucretia of the Aſturias, whoſe virtue was fortified by the deformity of her temper, made a vigorous reſiſtance, and cried out ſo loud, that ſhe was heard by the watch, who by chance were coming that way; and the inn being a houſe of no good fame, ſtept to hearken what paſſed there. They entered in upon hearing a noiſe, and demanded what was the matter? The innkeeper was in the kitchen, and whiſtled as if he knew not what was doing; but the watch obliged him to ſhew them to the room where the noiſe was made. They came at the nick of time, for the woman could hold out no longer. The officer who commanded the watch no ſooner ſaw what the muleteer was about, than he fell upon him with his ſtaff, and rated him in terms as impudent as the action which was the occaſion of them. That was not all; he ſeized the criminal, and carried him before the magiſtrate, together with the woman who had been aſſaulted, ſhe not minding the diſorder the carrier had put her into, ſo eager was ſhe to have juſtice of him. The magiſtrate examined her, and having conſidered the matter, thought the offender was unworthy of a pardon. He or-

dered him to be ſtripped, and whipped in his preſence; and that if the woman's huſband was not forthcoming the next day, two bailiffs, at the coſt and charges of the defendant, ſhould carry the plaintiff to Aſtorga.

For my part, I was more frighted than any of my fellow-travellers. I ran into the country, and traverſed I do not know how many fields and heaths, leaping all the ditches I met in my way, till I came at laſt to a foreſt. I entered it, and hid myſelf under the thickeſt hedge. I had not been long there before two men ahorſeback came up to me: "Who is there?" cried they: and I being ſo afraid that I made them no anſwer, they drew nearer me, and clapped a piſtol to my breaſt, commanding me to tell them who I was, whence I came, and what I was about, and charged me to conceal nothing from them. They queſtioned me ſo ſtrictly, that I thought I was bound to anſwer them as ſincerely as if the muleteer's threats were going to be put in execution, and the torture was before me. I told them I was a young man of Oviedo, going to Salamanca: I informed them of the fright I had been in, and that I had run away from the carrier for fear of the rack. They burſt out a-laughing at this diſcourſe, which ſhewed my ſimplicity; and one of them bade me have a good heart: "Come along with us, and be afraid of nothing, we will carry thee to a ſafe place." Saying this, he made me get up behind him, and rode away with me into the thickeſt of the foreſt.

I could not tell what to make of this rencounter. However, I did not think there was any thing ill in it. If theſe men were robbers, ſaid I to myſelf, they would have robbed, and perhaps have murdered me. They muſt be ſome honeſt gentlemen of theſe parts, who, ſeeing me ſo frighted, took pity of me, and carried me with them out of charity. I was not long in an uncertainty: after ſeveral turnings and windings we came to the foot of an hill, where we alighted. "We live here," ſays one of theſe cavaliers. I looked about to ſee where their dwelling ſhould be, but could perceive neither houſe, nor hut, nor the leaſt ſign of an habitation. In the mean time the two men lifted up a huge trap-door, covered with earth and briers, which concealed the entrance of a long alley under ground. Their horſes deſcended of themſelves, as being uſed to it. The cavaliers obliged me to follow them. They then tied down the trap-door with ropes which were faſtened to it on purpoſe: and thus was my uncle's hopeful nephew caught like a mouſe in a mouſe-trap.

CHAP. IV.

A deſcription of the habitation under ground, and what Gil Blas ſaw there.

I Then found out what ſort of men I was got amongſt, and one may imagine that my preſent fear could vie with that which the muleteer had put me into. I had now more reaſon to be afraid, I gave my ducats and my

life for gone, I looked upon myſelf as a victim leading to ſlaughter, and followed them where-ever they led me, like a perſon who hardly knew whether he was alive or dead. After we had gone about 200 paces in this ſubterranean labyrinth, deſcending ſtill as we went, we came to a ſtable, where hung two great iron lamps fixed to the ceiling, and always burning to light the place. There was good ſtore of hay and oats, and room for twenty horſes; but there were then no more than the two that we brought with us. An old negro, who ſeemed to have quite loſt his vigour, took them, and tied them to the manger.

We left the ſtable, and by the light of ſome other lamps, which ſerved, as one would think, to ſhew the horrour of the place, we arrived at a kitchen, where an old woman was roaſting ſome meat, and preparing for ſupper; the kitchen was adorned with all neceſſary utenſils; and adjoining to it was an office furniſhed with all ſorts of proviſions. The cook, to give you her picture, was a perſon upwards of ſixty. In her youth her hair was of a deep ſandy colour, as might be ſeen by part which was not turned gray, and retained ſtill its former hue; her chin was long and peaked; ſhe was blobber-lipped; her noſe large, of the aquiline kind, and advancing toward her chin; her eyes of a fine purple-red.

"Here, Dame Leonarda," ſays one of the cavaliers, preſenting me to that angel of darkneſs, "here is a young man we have brought you." He then turned about to me, and obſerving

ſerving I looked pale, and trembled, he again bade me not to be afraid, for they would do me no harm, adding, "We want a ſervant to aſſiſt our cook: we happened to light upon thee, and thou wilt have cauſe to rejoice at it: thou ſhalt here ſupply the place of a lad that died fifteen days ago: he was a ſickly youth; thou ſeemeſt to be luſty, and wilt not die ſo ſoon. It is true, thou wilt not ſee the ſun any more; but, to make amends, thou ſhalt have a good fire, and a full belly: thou ſhalt ſpend thy time with Leonarda, who is a very humane creature. Thou wilt want for nothing. I will ſhew thee that thou art not come among beggars." Come, follow me; "and taking a torch in his hand, led me into a cellar, where I ſaw a vaſt quantity of bottles and jars full, as he ſaid, of excellent wine. He then carried me into ſeveral rooms, ſome full of ſilks, others of ſtuff, others of linen; in others, there were veſſels of ſilver and gold, in others braſs, copper, and coarſer metals. After this, I followed him into a large hall, where were three copper ſconces, with candles burning. There were other rooms joining to this, and lights in every one of them. He demanded of me, as we went along, what my name was, and why I left Oviedo? When I had ſatisfied him, he cried, "Well, Gil Blas, ſince you have quitted your country to get a place, thank your ſtars that you have got ſo good a one. It was a happy thing for thee that thou metteſt with us: thou wilt have plenty of all things here, and roll in ſilver and gold: beſides, thou canſt here come

to

to no harm. This ſubterranean dwelling is ſo ſafe, that the officers of St Hermandad may come a hundred times into the foreſt, and not find it out; nobody but myſelf and my comrades know the entrance into it. Perhaps thou wilt aſk me how we could make it, and the inhabitants of the neighbourhood never diſcover us; thou muſt learn therefore that it is no work of ours; it was made a long time ago. After the Moors became maſters of Granada, Arragon, and almoſt all the reſt of Spain, the Chriſtians, who would not ſubmit to the yoke of the infidels, fled hither, and concealed themſelves in Biſcay and the Aſturias, whither the brave Don Pelagio retired. Being thus ſcattered up and down in ſmall companies, they lived in mountains and woods, ſome in caves, and ſome in ſuch ſubterranean vaults as theſe are. When afterwards they had the good fortune to drive their enemies out of Spain, they returned to the cities; ſince which time their retreats have ſerved for an aſylum to men of our profeſſion. It is true, St Hermandad * has diſcovered and deſtroyed ſome of them; but, thank heaven, there are ſome left ſtill. I have lived in this place ſecurely theſe fifteen years. My name is *Captain Rolando*; I am the chief of a band, and the man thou ſaweſt with me is one of them."

* The holy brotherhood in Spain, called *La Santa Hermandad*, was formerly an aſſociation to ſuppreſs robbers, in times of civil commotion; and at this day is an eſtabliſhment kept up through all Spain, for the ſame purpoſe.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the arrival of ſeveral other robbers in the habitation under ground, and the pleaſant diſcourſe they had together.

AS Signior Rolando had done ſpeaking, there appeared ſix new faces in the hall, the lieutenant and five men more of the band laden with plunder. They brought with them two bags full of ſugar, cinnamon, pepper, figs, almonds, and dried raiſins: the lieutenant addreſſed himſelf to the captain, and told him he had juſt taken thoſe two bags from a grocer of Benavento, whoſe mule alſo became his priſe. After which he gave an account of his expedition to the ſteward; and the booty taken from the grocer was depoſited in the office.

The next thing to be done was to make merry. The cloth was laid in the hall; I was ſent into the kitchen, and inſtructed how I was to employ myſelf by dame Leonarda. There was no help for it; I muſt do what ſhe bid me; and making a virtue of neceſſity, I put the beſt face I could upon it, and went about the work ſhe ſet me upon.

I put every thing in order in the buffet; I placed there the plate that was wanted, and ſtowed it with bottles of that excellent wine which Rolando boaſted of. I then ſerved up two ragouts, and the cavaliers immediately ſeated themſelves at the table. They all fell to with keen appetites, and I ſtood behind them

them to fill out wine. I did it with ſo good a grace, that I was complimented by them in an extraordinary manner. The captain in few words told them my ſtory, which very much diverted them. He cloſed all with ſaying, I was a lad of merit. I could very well have been without their praiſes, but they had never enough of it. They ſaid I ſeemed to be born to be their butler, and was worth a hundred of my predeceſſors. Dame Leonarda had the honour of preſenting nectar to theſe infernal gods, ever ſince his death; but they now deprived her of ſo glorious an employment, to beſtow it upon me; and I, like another Ganymede, ſucceeded this old Hebe.

The ragouts being diſpatched, I carried in ſeveral diſhes of roaſt meat: the robbers eating heartily of them, as they had done of the ragouts, became at laſt pretty well ſatisfied; they drank in proportion to their eating, and grew very glad, and very noiſy. They talked all at a time: one began a ſtory, another told a jeſt; one ſhouted, another ſung: they knew not what each other ſaid. Which made Captain Rolando, who had in vain endeavoured to have the beſt part of the talk, aſſume an air of authority, and impoſe ſilence on the reſt of the company. "Gentlemen," ſaid he, "hearken to what I have to ſay to you: Let us not deafen one another by talking all together; would it not be better to diſcourſe like reaſonable men? A thought is come into my head. Since we aſſociated ourſelves together, we never had the curioſity to inquire into each other's

ther's families, and how we came to take upon us this profeſſion: methinks it is a thing we ſhould not be ignorant of: let us tell our adventures to divert us. The lieutenant and the reſt, as if they had ſomething fine to relate, accepted of the captain's propoſitions with great demonſtrations of joy; and the captain himſelf ſpoke firſt in the following terms.

"You muſt know, Gentlemen, that I was the only ſon of a rich citizen of Madrid. There was no end of the rejoicings in our family on the day of my nativity. My father, who was ſtricken in years, was overjoyed to have an heir to his eſtate, and my mother undertook to give me ſuck herſelf: My grandfather by my mother's ſide was then living: he was an honeſt old fellow, who minded nothing but ſaying his roſary, and boaſting of his military exploits, for he had borne arms a long time. I became inſenſibly the idol of theſe three perſons: they always had me in their arms: and leſt ſtudying ſhould fatigue me too much in my younger years, they ſuffered me to ſpend them in the moſt childiſh amuſements. Children, ſaid my father, ſhould not apply themſelves to any thing too ſeriouſly; they ſhould ſtay till their judgments are riper. Waiting for this ripeneſs, I grew up without being able to read or write. But I did not however loſe my time; my father taught me a thouſand little plays. I could manage a pack of cards as well as any body; I underſtood dice too; and my grandfather told

told me romances of the ſeveral warlike enterpriſes wherein he had been concerned: he every day filled my head with them, and made me repeat verſes on ſo fine a ſubject, which I did very exactly, and for which my parents admired my memory: they were as well pleaſed with my wit, when I would break in upon their diſcourſe, and ſay any thing that came uppermoſt. What a rare boy he is? my father would cry with a look full of content. My mother overwhelmed me with her careſſes, and my grandfather wept for joy. I did whatever I would before them; they forgave me, let it be never ſo indecent. They even adored me. I was thirteen years of age before they thought of getting a maſter for me: they then provided one, but they gave him a ſtrict charge not to touch me. They permitted him to threaten me a little ſometimes, to make me afraid. This permiſſion was of no great uſe; for either I made a jeſt of his threats, or with tears in my eyes went to complain to my mother or my grandfather of my preceptor's ill uſage. It was to no purpoſe for the poor devil to excuſe himſelf. He always paſſed for a brute with them, and they were ſure to take my word before his. One day I ſcratched myſelf, and then cried out as if he had done it. My mother ran in, and drove him out of the houſe immediately, tho' he proteſted and called heaven to witneſs, that he had not touched me.

Thus did I get rid of all my preceptors, till I met with one of my own liking, a bache-

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lor of arts of Alcala, an excellent maſter for the heir of a family: he loved women, gaming, and wine: I could not have fallen into the hands of a perſon more to my humour. He, in the firſt place, endeavoured to gain me over to him by humouring me in all things. He ſucceeded, and by that means got the love of my parents, who abandoned me entirely to his conduct. He betimes inſtructed me in the knowledge of the world. He carried me with him to all the houſes of pleaſure which he haunted. He inſtilled into me the ſame love for it as he had himſelf; and excepting Latin he taught me every thing that he himſelf knew. As ſoon as he ſaw I had no farther occaſion for his precepts, he went away, and offered his ſervice elſewhere.

Though I was uſed in my infancy to a very free way of living, it was nothing to what I was when I became maſter of my own actions. I every moment turned my father and mother into ridicule: they bore it all in good part, and the more wicked I was, the more they took me to be pleaſant. There was no kind of debauchery which I was not guilty of: my companions were all of the ſame make: and as our parents did not give us money enough to continue ſo delicious a life, every one of us ſtole from them all we could lay our hands on; which not anſwering our occaſions, we began to rob at nights. The corregidor unhappily got intelligence of us; he reſolved to apprehend us; but we had notice of his miſchievous deſign. We ran for

it, and entered upon exploits on the high-way; ſince which, Gentlemen, I have had the good fortune to continue in my profeſſion many years, in ſpite of the perils that attend it."

Here the captain ended his relation, and the lieutenant began his. "An education, Gentlemen, quite oppoſite to that of Signior Rolando, produced the very ſame effect. My father was a butcher of Toledo; he paſſed, and with good reaſon, for the greateſt brute in that city; and my mother was every whit as ill-natured as he. They whipt me when I was a child, and ſtrove who ſhould do it to me moſt. I daily was turned up ten or twenty times: the leaſt fault I committed, had the ſevereſt puniſhment: it was in vain to ſit down on my knees, and beg pardon, to promiſe with tears in my eyes, that I would do ſo no more: they never would forgive me, and very often chaſtiſed me though I did not deſerve it. When my father beat me, my mother, as if he had not done as much as he ought to do, would be ſure to have a hand in it, and ſet him on, inſtead of interceding for me. This uſage gave me ſuch an averſion to the houſe, that I left it before I was fourteen years old. I begged my way through Arragon to Saragoſſa, where I aſſociated myſelf with ſome beggars, who lived a merry life enough. They taught me to counterfeit a blind man, a cripple, a lazar, and ſeveral other parts proper to procure alms. We every morning acted them over, as players rehearſe their comedies. Each of us knew

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his poſt by day, and at night we all met again, and ſpent together what the charity of pious Chriſtians had given us. In time I grew weary of living with thoſe wretches, and endeavoured to join myſelf to a company of a higher order, ſuch as lived by their induſtry. They ſhewed me a hundred tricks; but we could not ſtay long at Saragoſſa, having unluckily had a quarrel with one of the magiſtrates, who was of intelligence with us, and always protected us. Each of us went his way. As for me, I entered myſelf in a bold troop of adventurers, who raiſed contributions from travellers; and I liked their way of living ſo well, that I reſolved to think of no other. I am therefore, Gentlemen, very much obliged to my parents for uſing me ſo ill as they did; for if they had been kinder to me, I had doubtleſs been a ſorry butcher at this time, whereas I have now the honour to be your lieutenant."

"Theſe ſtories, Gentlemen," ſays a young robber, who ſat between the captain and the lieutenant, "are not ſo extraordinary, nor ſo curious as mine. I was the ſon of a peaſant in the neighbourhood of Seville. Three weeks after I was born, my mother, a young, handſome, neat woman, had a nurſery propoſed to her, the only ſon of a man of quality in Seville, of about my age. My mother accepted of the propoſal: ſhe went and fetched the child, which, as ſoon as ſhe brought home, ſhe obſerved to be ſomething like me. Upon this ſhe took a reſolution to make me paſs for

the child of quality, in hopes that I would one time or other reward her for it. My father, whoſe conſcience was not more delicate than any other peaſant's, approved of the cheat. Thus, after ſhe had changed our cloaths, ſhe put out the ſon of Don Rodriguez de Herrera to another nurſe, under my name, and nurſed me herſelf under his.

Whatever might be ſaid of inſtinct and the ſtrength of blood, the parents of the little gentleman were eaſily impoſed upon: they did not in the leaſt ſuſpect the trick that was played them; and I was never out of their arms till I was ſeven years of age. Their intention was to render me a perfect cavalier: they provided me maſters of all kinds; but I had no manner of inclination to the exerciſes they taught me, nor any more diſpoſition to learn the ſciences in which they would have inſtructed me. I had much rather play with the footmen and groom, whom I every moment followed into the kitchen and ſtables. But play was not long my predominant paſſion; I learned to drink before I was ſeventeen, and fell upon all the women that came in my way. I particularly was very fond of a ſervant-maid in the kitchen, who ſeemed to me to be the moſt amiable of them all: ſhe was a jolly merry wench; and I made love to her ſo openly, that Don Rodrigeuz took notice of it. He reproved me ſharply, upbraiding me with the baſeneſs of my inclinations; and leſt the ſight of the beloved object ſhould ren-

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der his remonſtrances uſeleſs, he turned my princeſs out of doors.

I was mightily diſpleaſed at it, reſolved to be revenge, robbed Don Rodriguez's wife of all her jewels, and ran after my fair Helen, who retired to a waſher-woman's houſe of her acquaintance: I took her thence at noon-day, that every body might know it; and not ſatisfied with this, I carried her into her own country, where I ſolemnly married her, as well to ſpite Herrera as to ſet a fine example for other children of quality. Three months after I was married, I heard that Don Rodriguez was dead; which news was, I thought, the beſt I ever heard in my life: I immediately repaired to Seville to demand poſſeſſion of his eſtate. But, alas! the caſe was altered; my mother was dead too, and on her deathbed ſhe confeſſed to the curate of the pariſh the trick ſhe had put upon Don Rodriguez, whoſe ſon had already filled my place, or rather his own; and every one was the more pleaſed with the diſcovery of his birth, that I had given ſo little hope of turning out well. By this means finding myſelf left deſtitute, and having no great fancy for my fat ſpouſe, I took to the company of ſome knights of fortune, with whom I began my exploits on the road."

The young robber having finiſhed his ſtory, another ſaid, He was the ſon of a merchant of Burgos; that he raſhly took orders in his youth, and apoſtatiſed ſome years after. In fine, the eight robbers talked every one of his

birth in their turn; and when I had heard them all ſpeak, I was not ſurpriſed to meet them all together. They afterwards turned their diſcourſe, and debated ſeveral projects for the next campaign: they concluded to proſecute one of them; and it being late, went all to ſleep in their ſeveral chambers. I followed the captain into his, where while I helped to undreſs him, "Thou ſeeſt," ſaid he, Gil Blas, "how we live here: we are always merry; we have neither hatred nor envy among us, nor ever had we the leaſt quarrel: we agree better than monks in a convent: thou art going, child, to live a pleaſant life of it. I do not take thee to be ſuch a fool as to make any ſcruple of living with robbers. Who are there in the world that are not ſuch? every man loves to take another man's goods from him; this ſentiment is general; the manner of doing it is only different: for example, conquerors ſeize the territories of their neighbours; perſons of quality borrow, and never pay; bankers, brokers, and all ſorts of tradeſmen, as well great as ſmall, are not very ſcrupulous in this point. I will not ſay any thing of the lawyers; their practices are well enough known. However, it muſt be owned, they are more innocent than we; for we often take away the lives of the innocent, and they ſometimes ſave the guilty."

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of an attempt of Gil Blas to make his eſcape, and what was the ſucceſs of it.

AFter the captain of the robbers had made this apology for his profeſſion, he went to bed; and I returned to the hall, where I cleared the table, and put every thing in order. I then went into the kitchen, where Domingo, ſo the old negro was called, and dame Leonarda were at ſupper, expecting me to come to them. Though I had no ſtomach, I ſat down with them; I could eat nothing; and my looks ſhewed that I was as much afflicted as I had reaſon to be. Thoſe two equivalent figures endeavoured to comfort me. "Why are you troubled, child?" ſays the old woman; "you ought rather to rejoice at your being here; you are young and eaſy; you would ſoon have been ruined, had you lived in the world; you would have met with a parcel of libertines, who would have engaged you in all manner of debauchery, whereas your innocence will here be ſafe. "Dame Leonarda is in the right," ſays the old negro, very gravely; "beſides, there is nothing but trouble in the world: come, friend, thank heaven that you are at once delivered from all the perils, cares, and afflictions of life." I hearkened to them with ſeeming attention: for it ſignified nothing to do otherwiſe. Domingo, after he had plentifully eaten and drank, retired to his ſtable. Leonarda took alſo a lamp,

and

and conducted me to a vault which the robbers made uſe of for a burying-place, when any of their fellows died a natural death: I there ſpied a pallet, which looked more like a tomb than a bed. "This is your chamber," ſays ſhe; "the lad, whoſe place it is your good fortune to fill, lay there as long as he lived, and ſome time after he was dead. He was ſuch a fool as to die in the flower of his age: don't you be ſo ſilly as to follow his example." Saying this, ſhe gave me the lamp, and returned to the kitchen. I ſet the lamp upon the ground, I flung myſelf on the pallet, not ſo much to ſleep, as to give myſelf up entirely to my reflections. O heaven, what a terrible fate has befallen me! cried I: I am not only doomed never to ſee the light of the ſun more; but, as if it were not enough to be buried alive at eighteen years old, I am alſo reduced to ſerve thieves by day, and to ſpend the night with the dead! theſe mortifying thoughts made me burſt out into tears. I a hundred times curſed my uncle's deſire to ſend me to Salamanca. I repented that I ran away from the magiſtrate at Cacabelos. I would gladly have been racked, to have got above ground again. But conſidering that bemoaning myſelf thus, was all in vain, I bent my thoughts to contrive the means to eſcape. Is it impoſſible, ſaid I to myſelf, to get out from hence? the robbers are aſleep; the cook and the negro will be the ſame preſently. While they are ſleeping, cannot I with this lamp find out the alley by which I deſcended into this hell? It is true,

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do not believe I am ſtrong enough to lift up the trap-door; but let me try, I will not have any blame lie on me that I did not what I could to eſcape. Deſpair will lend me ſtrength, and perhaps I may accompliſh it.

Thus did I form this great deſign, and roſe, when I thought Leonarda and Domingo were aſt. I took the lamp, and went out of the ault, recommending myſelf to all the ſaints n paradiſe. It was not without much difficul- y that I found out all the turnings and wind- ngs of this new labyrinth. I arrived, in the nd, at the gate of the ſtable, and at laſt per- ceived the alley I was in queſt of. I marched n, and advanced towards the trap-door with s much nimbleneſs as joy. But alas! in the middle of the alley I met with a curſed grate, well faſtened, and the bars ſo cloſe, a man could hardly put his hand through. I was ſadly vexed at this obſtacle, which I had not obſerved as we entered. I handled the bars, I examined the lock, I endeavoured to break t open; when on a ſudden I felt on my ſhoulders half a dozen luſty bangs of a bull's izzle; I cried out, ſo that all the vault rang with it; and looking behind me, ſaw the old negro in his ſhirt, with a dark lantern in one hand, and the inſtrument of my correction in the other. "So, ſo, you young raſcal you," cried he, "you would get out, would you? do not think you can be too hard for me. I heard you; you thought the grate was open. Believe me, friend, you ſhall hereafter find it always ſhut. When we keep any one here againſt

againſt his mind, he muſt be cunninger than you if he can eſcape us."

In the mean time, my crying out ſo awakened two or three of the robbers, who not knowing whether it was not the St Hermandad that was coming down upon them, got up and awoke their comrades: they roſe all in an inſtant, and came running almoſt naked to the place where I was with Domingo. But as ſoon as they underſtood what was the matter, their concern was converted into laughter. "How, Gil Blas," ſaid the apoſtate robber, "thou haſt not been here ſix hours yet, and wouldſt thou be gone already? what wouldſt thou do, if thou wert to be a monk? go, get thee to bed, thou ſhalt be forgiven this time, in conſideration of the blows of Domingo's bull's pizzle; but if thou doſt ever make another ſuch attempt, by St Bartholomew, we will flay thee alive." At theſe words he retired. The other robbers returned alſo to their chambers. The old negro betook himſelf to his ſtable again, very well pleaſed with his expedition; and I went back to my burying-place, where I paſſed the reſt of the night in ſighing and weeping.

CHAP. VII.

What Gil Blas did, when he could not do better.

I Thought I ſhould have died of the grief which ſeized me, and continued ſeveral days after my fruitleſs attempt to eſcape; I could hardly hold up my head, or ſtand on my

my feet; but at laſt my good genius inſpired me with a reſolution to diſſemble. I affected to ſeem leſs melancholy, I began to laugh and ſing, though I had no manner of mind to it. In a word, I put ſuch a conſtraint upon myſelf, that Leonarda and Domingo were deceived by it. They believed that uſe had made the cage familiar to the bird. The robbers were of the ſame opinion. I aſſumed a gay air when I filled out their wine for them, and put in a word now and then among them, when I could do it to divert them. They were pleaſed with the freedom I took. "Gil Blas," ſaid the captain, one evening when I had been very pleaſant, "thou didſt well to baniſh melancholy; I am charmed with thy humour, and thy wit: we do not know people at firſt; I did not take thee to have ſo much wit, and ſo much good humour."

The reſt of them ſpoke mightily in praiſe of me. They appeared ſo well diſpoſed towards me, that I reſolved to take hold of that occaſion, and ſaid, Gentlemen, let me ſpeak my mind to you: ſince my being here, I find I am quite another creature; you have cured me of the prejudices of education; I have inſenſibly acquired your ſentiments and a liking to your profeſſion. I long to have the honour of being one of your brethren, and to ſhare with you in the perils of your expeditions. All the company applauded this diſcourſe; they extolled my good-will, and reſolved unanimouſly that I ſhould ſerve a while to make trial of my vocation, and afterwards be

be admitted into the band. In hopes of so honourable a preferment, I continued to put a force upon my inclinations, and to exercise my employment of butler. It was an extreme mortification to me to ſtay where I was; for I had no ambition to become a robber, only to have an opportunity by it to get out of the vault where I was confined, in hopes to make my eſcape from them. Theſe hopes kept me alive: I was often tired with waiting; and more than once endeavoured to ſurpriſe Domingo's vigilance, but there was no way of doing it, he was too much upon his guard: I would have defied a hundred Orpheuſes to charm this Cerberus. Indeed I was ſo afraid of rendering myſelf ſuſpected, that I did not do what I could to deceive him. He watched me, and I was obliged to act very warily, that I might not betray myſelf. I adjourned therefore all thoughts of getting out, till the appointed time for my reception into the troop; and I waited for it as impatiently as if I was then to be admitted among the knights of the order.

The time, thank heaven, came, ſix months after, when Signior Rolando addreſſed himſelf thus to his comrades. "We muſt keep our words, Gentlemen, with Gil Blas; I have no ill opinion of that lad: I believe we ſhall make ſomething of him; I think we had beſt let him go with us to-morrow to gather laurels on the highway. We will take it upon ourſelves to breed him up in the way to glory." The robbers joined all in with him; and to ſhew me that they already looked upon me as one

one of their companions, they diſpenſed with my waiting upon them. They reſtored to dame Leonarda the poſt they had taken from her in my favour. They made me throw aſide my habit, which was only a thread-bare frock, and equipped me out with the ſpoils of a gentleman whom they had lately robbed. After which I prepared myſelf for my firſt campaign.

CHAP. VIII.

Gil Blas accompanies the robbers. An exploit of his on the highway.

IT was about day-break, in the month of September, that I ſallied out of our ſubterranean dwelling with the robbers. I was armed like them, with a carabine, two piſtols, a ſword and bayonet, and mounted on a pretty good horſe, which they took from the ſame gentleman whoſe cloaths I wore. I had ſo long lived in darkneſs, that the light dazzled my eyes; but by degrees I could bear it.

We paſſed by Ponferrada, and poſted ourſelves in ambuſh in a little wood near the high road to Leon. We were there waiting for ſome good booty, when we ſpied a monk of the order of St Dominique, mounted, contrary to the rules of that order, on a ſorry mule. "Heaven be praiſed," cried the captain, ſmiling; "this is a maſterpiece for Gil Blas; he muſt diſmount the monk; let us ſee how he will do it." All the robbers agreed I was very fit for that commiſſion; and they exhorted

horted me to behave myſelf well in the execution of it. "I will pleaſe you, Gentlemen," ſaid I to them; "I will ſtrip the prieſt to his ſkin, and bring you his mule hither." "No, no," replied Rolando, "it is not worth while; bring us only his Reverence's purſe; that is all we require of you." Upon which I rode out of the wood: I came up with the monk, praying heaven to forgive the wicked action I was about. I would gladly have made my eſcape then; but the greateſt part of the thieves were better mounted than I; if they had perceived that I fled, they would quickly have been at my heels, and have either carried me back with them, or have diſcharged their carabines at me, which I did not care to hazard, the ſtep was too delicate. I demanded the prieſt's purſe as ſoon as I drew near him: I held my piſtol to his breaſt to ſhew I was in earneſt. He ſtopt ſhort to take a view of me, and did not ſeem at all afraid. "Child," ſays he, "you are very young; you begin this rogue's trade betimes." "Father," ſaid I, "as bad as it is, I wiſh I had begun it ſooner." "Ah ſon," replied the good man, who did not underſtand my meaning, "what doſt thou ſay? How blind art thou! ſuffer me to lay before thee thy wretched condition." "Father," ſaid I, interrupting him, "no preaching, I beſeech you; I don't uſe the highway to hear ſermons; I want money." "Money!" cried the monk, in a ſurpriſe: "you have an ill opinion of the charity of the Spaniards, if you imagine that perſons of my character have occaſion of money when they tra-

vel in Spain. Be not deceived, we are entertained where-ever we come, we are lodged, we are fed; and all that is required of us in return, is our prayers. In ſhort, we never carry money on the road with us; we give ourſelves up to providence." "No, no," replied I, "you do not always give yourſelves up to it; you have ſometimes good piſtoles about you to make you the more ſure of providence: father, let us have done; my comrades, who are in this wood, expect my return with impatience. Fling your purſe on the ground this minute, or I will kill you."

I pronounced theſe words with ſo threatening an air, that the prieſt began to be afraid of his life. "Stay," ſays he, "I will do as you would have me, ſince it muſt be ſo; I perceive that rhetorical figures have no force with ſuch men as you are." Saying this, he pulled a great ſhamoy purſe out from under his gown, and threw it upon the ground. I then bade him go on, which he did not give me the trouble to repeat. He pricked his mule's ſides; and the beaſt doing much better than I thought he could, (for I took her to be ſuch another as my uncle's), anſwered very well the haſte he was in to get out of my ſight. When he was at ſome diſtance, I alighted, and took up the purſe, which was weighty; I mounted my horſe again, and made as faſt as I could to the robbers, who were impatient to felicitate me on my victory: they would ſcarce give me time to alight, ſo haſty were they to embrace me. "Courage, Gil Blas," ſays Rolando, "thou

haſt done wonders; I had my eye upon thee all the while; I obſerved thy countenance; I foretell that thou wilt make an excellent man for the road." The lieutenant and the reſt of them applauded the prediction, and aſſured me that I could not fail of accompliſhing it. I thanked them for the high idea they had of me, and promiſed them to do my utmoſt to deſerve it.

After they had praiſed me ſo much more than belonged to me, they wanted to examine the booty I had brought them. "Let us ſee," cried they, "what the monk had in his purſe." "It muſt be well ſtored," ſaid one of them, "for thoſe Reverend fathers do not generally travel like pilgrims." The captain untied the purſe, opened it, and took out of it three or four handfuls of little copper medals, intermixed with Agnus Dei's, and ſome crucifixes. At the ſight of ſuch an uncommon prize, all the thieves fell into an immoderate fit of laughter. "We are mightily obliged to Gil Blas," ſaid the lieutenant; "his firſt booty is a very ſalutary one." This jeſt was the occaſion of many others: thoſe rogues, particularly he who had apoſtatiſed, were very merry upon it; they ſaid a thouſand things that ſhewed the wickedneſs of their morals: I was the only perſon who did not make a laughing matter of it. The raillery was all at my expenſe, which was enough to ſpoil my mirth, had I been ſo inclined: every one had a fling at me; and the captain ſaid, "Faith, Gil Blas, I adviſe thee to have no more to do with monks

monks, they will be too cunning, and too hard for thee."

CHAP. IX.

Of a ſerious adventure which followed that pleaſant one.

WE ſtaid almoſt all day in the wood, but met with no prize to make amends for our balk in the prieſt. In the evening we returned towards our dwelling under ground; the robbers diverted themſelves all the way with my booty. At laſt we ſpied at a diſtance a coach and four mules. They drew nearer to us upon a full trot; and by the coach rode three men, who ſeemed to be very well armed. Rolando bid his band halt, to conſult what was to be done. The robbers reſolved to attack them: ſo we marched up to the coach in rank and file, prepared for a battle. Though I had been ſo highly complimented in the wood, I fell a-trembling, and was ſeized with a cold ſweat all over me. My poſt happened to be unluckily in the front between the captain and the lieutenant; I ſuppoſed they contrived it ſo, to ſee how I would ſtand fire. Rolando obſerving in what a panic I was, caſt a ſour look at me, and ſaid ſurlily, 'Mind me, Gil Blas, I give thee fair warning; if thou doſt flinch, I will ſhoot thee through the head." I was too well ſatisfied that he would do as he ſaid, not to take care of my behaviour; ſo I took a reſolution to dare my fate, and recommended my ſoul to heaven.

By this time the coach was got up with us; they perceived what ſort of men we were, and what our deſign was: they ſtopped at twenty paces diſtance; they had carabines and piſtols as well as we; and while they were preparing to receive us, there leaped out of the coach a gentleman richly dreſſed. He mounted a led horſe, and put himſelf at the head of thoſe that attended him. He had no arms but a ſword and two piſtols: there were nine of us, and but four of them, the coachman ſitting neuter in his box. They advanced towards us ſo daringly, that my fright redoubled upon it; however, though I ſhook hand and foot, I made ready to do as the reſt did: to ſpeak the truth, I was ſo afraid that I winked when I fired my carabine, and ſhot it off in ſuch a manner, that I believe I have nothing to repent of on that ſcore.

I will not enter into the particulars of the action: though I was by I ſaw nothing; and my fear was ſo ſtrong, that I did not ſee the horrour of the ſight that terrified me: all that I know is, that, after great firing on both ſides, I heard my companions ſhout, and cry Victory! victory! upon which I took heart and looking up, ſaw the four men who defended the coach dead on the ſpot. On our ſide we loſt only one man, the apoſtate, who met with a juſt puniſhment for his apoſtaſy and ridiculing religion in the prieſt's crucifixes: the lieutenant was wounded in the arm, but very ſlightly, the ball only razing the ſkin. Signior Rolando ran immediate

to the coach-door: there was a lady in it of 24 or 25 years of age, who looked very lovely, notwithſtanding the ſad condition ſhe was in: ſhe ſwooned away during the combat, and was not recovered out of her ſwoon, when the captain came up to her. While he ſtood gazing upon her, we fell upon the plunder: the firſt thing we did was to ſecure the horſes of the dead cavaliers; thoſe animals, frighted at the noiſe of the carabines and piſtols, broke looſe, and ran about without their riders, who were killed in the combat: the mules ſtood ſtill all the time of the action, though the coachman quitted his box to ſave himſelf. We alighted off our horſes, took the mules from the coach, and loaded them with ſeveral bundles and parcels which we found before and behind the coach. That done, the captain ordered us to take the lady, who was ſtill in a ſort of fit, and put her on horſeback. Accordingly one of the robbers, who was beſt mounted, took her in his arms, and ſeated her before him. We ſtript the dead men, and left them with the coach in the highway, taking with us the lady, the mules, and the horſes.

CHAP. X.

How the robbers treated the lady. Of a great deſign formed by Gil Blas, and what was the conſequence of it.

ABout an hour after night we arrived at our ſubterranean habitation: we put the

the horſes and mules up in our ſtable, and were forced to look after them ourſelves: for the old negro had been abed three hours; beſides a violent fit of the gout which he had upon him, he was ſeized all over with a fit of the rheumatiſm. We left that wretch curſing and ſwearing, and went into the kitchen, where we carried the lady, and were every one of us very buſy about her: we managed it ſo well, that we recovered her out of her ſwoon; but when ſhe had her ſenſes reſtored to her, and ſaw herſelf in the arms of ſeveral men who were ſtrangers to her, ſhe imagined how miſerable ſhe was, and fell a-trembling. Whatever grief and deſpair could repreſent to her, appeared before her eyes, which ſhe lifted to heaven, as if to upbraid it for the injury ſhe was threatened with: theſe terrible ideas threw her into a ſecond ſwoon; her eyes ſhut; and the robbers were afraid that death had deprived them of their prey. The captain thinking it more proper to leave her to herſelf, than to plague her with new relief from them, ordered her to be put upon Leonarda's bed, where ſhe lay by herſelf, expoſed to the inſults of the moſt wicked of mortals.

We went thence into the hall, where one of the robbers who had been a ſurgeon, dreſſed the lieutenant's wound. We then examined our parcels and bundles, which we found full of all ſorts of cloaths, linen, woollen, and ſilk, and among the reſt a bag of piſtoles, which was very welcome to the gentlemen concerned.

ed. After this the cook laid the cloth, and brought in ſupper. All our diſcourſe was of the great victory we had gained. Upon which Rolando addreſſed himſelf to me, and ſaid, "Thou muſt own, Gil Blas, thou waſt in a dreadful fright." "I cannot deny it," replied I; "but when I have ſerved two or three campaigns, you ſhall ſee what feats I will do." All the company took my part, and ſaid, that for that time I ſhould be excuſed; that it was a briſk action, and conſidering I was a young man, who had never ſtood fire before, I had come off pretty well. We then talked of the mules and horſes we had taken; and it was reſolved that we ſhould all go the next day, before it was light, to Manſilla to ſell them; for probably our expedition would not be heard of there by that time. When we had ſupped, we returned to the lady, whom we found as we left her: tho' ſhe was in that condition, and ſeemed rather dead than alive, ſome of the robbers caſt a profane eye upon her, and ſhewed their brutal luſt, which they would have ſatisfied, if Rolando had not hindered them, by repreſenting that they ought at leaſt to ſtay till the lady was recovered out of her fit, which her grief had thrown her into, and taken from her the uſe of her ſenſes: the reſpect they bore for their captain, was a reſtraint upon their incontinence. Nothing elſe could have ſaved the lady; perhaps death itſelf had not been a defence for her honour. We again left that unfortunate woman in the ſame condition, Rolando charging Leonarda

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to take care of her, and retired all to our chambers. As for me, as ſoon as I lay down, inſtead of ſleeping, I could not help thinking on the misfortune of the lady; I did not doubt of her being a perſon of quality, and on that account thought her lot more deplorable. I trembled to conſider the horrours that ſurrounded her, and was as much concerned for her as if ſhe had been my relation or friend. In fine, after having pitied her heartily, I contrived how to deliver her from the danger ſhe was in, and carry her out of our under-ground habitation; I conſidered that the old negro could not ſtir; and that ſince his indiſpoſition the cook kept the key of the grate: this made me form a project, which I immediately put in execution in the following manner.

I pretended to have the colic, and cried out as if I was in terrible pain. The robbers awoke, and preſently came to me; they aſked me why I made ſuch a noiſe? I anſwered, I was racked with a fit of the colic; and to ſhew them that I was ſincere, I made a hundred ugly faces, like a man in violent pain. I then lay ſtill, as if the fit was over, and I ſomewhat eaſier. Preſently after I rolled on my pallet, and twiſted my arms as if the fit came upon me again: in a word, I acted my part ſo well, that, as cunning as they were, I impoſed upon all of them, and they took me to be terribly tortured by my diſtemper. They were all very officious to aſſiſt me; one brought me a bottle of brandy, and made me drink

drink half of it; another, whether I would or not, anointed me with the oil of ſweet almonds; a third warmed a napkin, and clapt it burning hot to my belly. I in vain cried out, Hold: they imputed my cries to my colic, and made me continually endure real pain to eaſe me of a counterfeit one. At laſt, not being able to bear it any longer, I told them I was pretty well again, and begged them to have mercy upon me. They then gave over applying their remedies; and I took care how I complained again, for fear they ſhould again torture me with their relief.

This ſcene laſted near three hours: after which the robbers ſuppoſing it was about the time they had reſolved to go to Manſilla, prepared for that expedition. I made as if I would fain go with them, and was getting up, but they would not let me: "No, no," ſays Signior Rolando, "ſtay here, child, thou ſhalt go with us when thou art better in health; the colic may now take thee again; thou canſt not yet bear travelling." I did not think it to inſiſt farther upon going, leſt they ſhould have complied with my requeſt; I only ſeemed to be very ſorry I could not be one amongſt them on that occaſion: and I did ſo well, that they all went out of our ſubterranean dwelling, without the leaſt ſuſpicion of my deſign. When they were gone, as I heartily wiſhed them, ſaid I to myſelf, "Now, Gil Blas, is the time for thee to pluck up all thy reſolution; take courage to finiſh what thou haſt ſo happily begun. Domingo is not

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in a condition to oppoſe thy enterpriſe, and Leonarda cannot hinder thy executing it. Take hold of this opportunity to eſcape, thou wilt never have a more favourable one." Theſe reflections emboldened me; I roſe, took my ſword and my piſtols, and went firſt into the kitchen: but before I entered, I heard Leonarda talk, and ſtopped to liſten, where ſhe was endeavouring to comfort the ſtrange lady, who being come to herſelf, and conſidering her misfortune, wept bitterly. "Ay, ay," ſays Leonarda, "weep on, ſigh as much as you can, it will be ſome eaſe to you; the fit you were in was dangerous; but now it is over, there is nothing to fear: while you weep there is no danger: your grief will wear away by degrees; and you will like living with our gentlemen here, who are men of honour: they will treat you like a princeſs; they will be extremely fond of you, and doubtleſs you will grow as fond of them alſo: there is many a woman that would be glad to be in your place."

I did not give Leonarda time to proceed; I entered, and clapping a piſtol to her breaſt, bade her give me the key of the grate. She was in a dreadful ſurpriſe; and though well advanced in years, ſhe was too much in love with life to refuſe my demand. When I had got the key, I addreſſed myſelf thus to the lady: "Madam, heaven has ſent you a deliverer: riſe and follow me, I will conduct you whither you pleaſe to command me." The lady was not deaf to this offer. It made ſuch

an impreſſion on her mind, that, recollecting all her ſtrength, ſhe aroſe, threw herſelf at my feet, and implored me to ſave her honour. I raiſed her up, and aſſured her, ſhe might depend upon me. I then took ſome cords, which I ſpied in the kitchen, and with the lady's help tied Leonarda to the leg of a table, proteſting that I would kill her if ſhe made the leaſt noiſe: I lighted a lamp, and went with the lady to the room, where was the robbers treaſure of gold and ſilver: I put as many ſingle and double piſtoles in my pockets as they would hold, and obliged the lady to take what ſhe could carry, repreſenting to her that ſhe only took what was her own. Having thus made a good proviſion for ourſelves, we went to the ſtable, which I entered by myſelf, with my piſtols cocked. I ſuppoſed that the old negro, as ill as he was of the gout and rheumatiſm, would not tamely let me ſaddle and bridle my horſe, and reſolved, if he reſiſted, to cure him of all his ails for ever. But as good-luck would have it, his pains were at that time ſo violent, that I took the horſe out of the ſtable without his perceiving it. The lady waited for me at the door: we ſoon paſſed through the alley that led to the grate, which we opened, and coming to the trap door, with much ado lifted it up. Had we not been ſtrengthened by our great deſire to eſcape, we ſhould never have been able to have done it. Day began to break when we ſaw ourſelves out of that abyſs, from whence we endeavoured to get

away as fast as we could. I mounted my horſe, and took the lady behind me: we gallopped along the firſt path we met with, and ſoon got out of the foreſt: we came to a plain, where were ſeveral roads; we took the firſt; and I was in a mortal dread leſt it ſhould lead to Manſilla, and ſo meet Rolando and his comrades: but it happened that I was afraid without a cauſe; and about two a-clock in the afternoon we arrived at Aſtorga. I obſerved the people gazed at us, as at a novelty, to ſee a woman ahorſeback behind a man. We alighted at the firſt inn we came to; and I immediately ordered a partridge and pheaſant to be laid down to the fire. While my orders were executing, I conducted the lady to a chamber, where we entered into converſation, which we could not do on the road, becauſe of the haſte we made. She expreſſed herſelf to be extremely ſenſible of the obligation I had laid upon her, ſaying, ſhe could not think that a perſon capable of ſo generous an action, was a companion of the rogues out of whoſe hands I had delivered her. I told her my ſtory, to confirm the good opinion ſhe had conceived of me. By which ſhe put confidence in me, and informed me of her misfortunes, as I am about to relate them in the following chapter.

CHA

CHAP. XI.

The ſtory of Donna Mencia de Moſquera.

I Was born at Valladolid; my name is *Donna Mencia de Moſquera*; my father Don Martin, after having ſpent almoſt all his patrimony in the ſervice, was killed in Portugal at the head of a regiment which he commanded there. He left me ſo little fortune, that I was an indifferent match for any one, though I was an only daughter. However, as little as I had, I did not want lovers; for ſeveral of the moſt conſiderable gentlemen of Spain courted me, but I preferred Don Alvar de Mello to all of them. Indeed he was the handſomeſt man of them all, though that only would not have gained him the preference. He had wit, diſcretion, courage, and probity; beſides, he had the character of the moſt gallant man of his time. If he made an entertainment, nothing could be more elegant: if he appeared at the juſts, his ſtrength and his dexterity were admired by all: for theſe reaſons I loved and married him.

A few days after our marriage, he met Don Andrea de Baeſa, his rival, in a by-place; they quarrelled and drew. Don Andrea was killed, and he being the nephew of the corregidor of Valladolid, a violent and mortal enemy of the family of Mello, Don Alvar did not think himſelf ſafe in that city. He came home immediately, where, while his horſe was getting ready, he told me what had

happened: "My dear Mencia," said he, "we must part. You know the corregidor. Do not let us flatter ourselves. He will prosecute me to the utmost. You are not ignorant of his power, I shall not be safe in the kingdom." He was so troubled at our parting, and so grieved at my grief, that he could say no more. I made him take some jewels, and as much gold as he could carry with him. We then embraced, and for a quarter of an hour did nothing but mingle sighs and tears. Having notice that his horse was ready, he broke from my arms, and departed, leaving me in a condition which it is impossible to represent. Happy had I been, if my affliction had killed me at the instant. How much grief and pain had death then spared me! Some hours after Don Alvar's flight, the corregidor was informed of it, and ordered him to be pursued. He did his utmost to get him into his custody. My husband was too hard for him, and got into a place of security. Thus the magistrate was forced to content himself with the poor satisfaction of seizing the goods of a man whose blood he thirsted after; and he did that effectually. He left left me scarce wherewith to subsist. Poor and pitiful was my condition. I had but one woman-servant to wait upon me. I spent all my days in weeping, not for my poverty, which I bore patiently, but for the absence of my husband, whom I loved, but could hear no tidings of, though he had promised at parting, that he would carefully inform me of

of his lot, into whatever part of the world his evil ſtars might lead him. I had no news of him for ſeven years together, and not knowing what was become of him, lived in continual ſorrow. At laſt I underſtood that he was killed in a battle, fighting for the king of Portugal in the kingdom of Fez: a man who came lately from Africa gave me an account of it, aſſuring me that he was perfectly well acquainted with Don Alvar de Mello; that he had ſerved with him in the Portugueſe army, and ſaw him fall in the action: to this he added ſome circumſtances, which made me believe that my huſband was dead.

About that time Don Ambroſio Meſia Carillo, Marquis de la Guardia, came to Valladolid. He was one of thoſe old lords, who, by their polite and gallant behaviour, make women forget their age, and think them as taking as if they were in their youth ſtill. One day ſome body told him the ſtory of Don Alvar; and deſcribed me to him ſo favourably, that he had a mind to ſee me. He came to my lodgings, gave me a viſit, and, though I was in ſo much grief, took ſuch a liking to me, that it turned to a tender paſſion. Perhaps indeed he pitied my ſad and diſmal condition, and pity very often converts itſelf into love: my mournful ſtate touched him, and he told me more than once, he looked upon me as a prodigy of conſtancy, and even envied the fate of my huſband in having ſuch a faithful wife, though his end was ſo deplo-

rable. In ſhort, from the very firſt viſit he made me, he reſolved to marry me, if I would have him. He broke his mind to a relation of mine, who came to me, and repreſented to me, that my huſband being killed in Fez, it was by no means reaſonable that I ſhould bury myſelf alive, and make my charms uſeleſs to my youth; that I had mourned long enough for a man with whom I had lived ſo little a while, and ought to take hold of the opportunity that was offered me to be the happieſt woman in the world. She then ſet forth the Marquis's nobility, riches, and character. But all ſhe ſaid was loſt upon me: I would not hearken to her: not that I made a doubt of Don Alvar's death, or was afraid of ſeeing him return on a ſudden, when I leaſt expected him. I had ſo little inclination to a ſecond marriage, or rather ſo much repugnance to it, after I had been ſo unfortunate in my firſt, that I could not think of complying with my kinſwoman's counſel. However, ſhe did not give over perſuading me: on the contrary, ſhe grew daily a more zealous advocate for Don Ambroſio: ſhe engaged all my relations in that old lord's intereſts: they all importuned me to accept of ſo advantageous a match. I was every minute teaſed by them; and my poverty, which increaſed upon me more and more, pleaded with them alſo, inſomuch that I could reſiſt no longer.

I gave way to their importunity, and at their preſſing inſtances married the Marquis de

le la Guardia, who, the next day after we were married, carried me to a fine ſeat of his near Burgos, between Grajal and Rodillas. His love became more violent than ever; he ſtudied to pleaſe me in every thing he did: he prevented my deſires, and never did huſband do more to gain the heart of a wife; never was lover more complaiſant to a miſtreſs. I ſhould paſſionately have loved Don Ambrogio, notwithſtanding the difference of our ages, if I could have loved any one but Don Alvar. But a conſtant heart can have but one paſſion. The remembrance of my firſt huſband, rendered all the pains my ſecond took to pleaſe me, ineffectual. All the returns I made for his tenderneſs, were reſpect and gratitude.

In this diſpoſition was I, when looking out of my window one day to take the air, I perceived a kind of peaſant in the garden, who looked at me very attentively. I took him for an aſſiſtant to the gardener, and did not much mind him; but the next day looking out of the ſame window, I ſpied him in the ſame place again, and he ſeemed to look at me with more attention than before; which had ſuch an effect upon me, that I examined his face too more curiouſly, and fancied I ſaw the features of the unhappy Don Alvar. This thought put me into a terrible apprehenſion of the truth of it. I cried out; by good fortune no body was then near me, but Ines my favourite woman. I told her what my thought was; ſhe laughed at me, ſuppoſing

ſuppoſing ſome ſmall likeneſs had impoſed upon my ſight. "Do not think it," Madam, ſaid ſhe; "what likelihood is there that your firſt huſband ſhould be in the garden, in the form of a peaſant? can you believe him to be ſtill in the land of the living? I will go down," added ſhe, "and talk to this countryman. I will know who he is, and bring you an account of it in an inſtant." Accordingly ſhe did ſo, and when ſhe came back, I obſerved her to be in great diſorder. "Madam," ſays ſhe, "your ſuſpicion was but too well grounded. It is Don Alvar himſelf, whom you ſaw. He made the diſcovery immediately, and deſires to have ſome diſcourſe with you."

The Marquis was then gone to Burgos; by which means I had an opportunity to receive Don Alvar, and ordered my woman to conduct him into my cloſet. You may imagine I was in the utmoſt confuſion; I could not bear the ſight of a man who had ſo much reaſon to upbraid me with inconſtancy, I fell into a ſwoon when he entered the cloſet. Ines and he gave me all their aſſiſtance, and as I came a little to myſelf, Don Alvar ſaid, "I beg you, Madam, to recover yourſelf: do not let my preſence incommode you. It is not my intention to give you the leaſt trouble. I am not come like an enraged huſband to demand an account of the faith you vowed to me, and to charge you with the crime of a ſecond engagement contracted by you. I am not ignorant that it was your relations doing. I know how they perſecuted you to conſent

to

o it: that it was reported and believed at Valladolid that I was dead, and that you yourself had good reaſon to think ſo, having received no letter from me to inform you of the contrary. In fine, I know what manner of life you led after our cruel ſeparation; and hat neceſſity, rather than love, threw you into the arms of—" "Ah, my Lord," ſaid I, interrupting him, "why will you excuſe me? I m guilty, ſince you are alive. Oh that I was now in the ſame miſerable condition that Don Ambroſio found me! Oh wretched marriage! I ſhould otherwiſe, as miſerable as was, have had the comfort to meet you without bluſhing."

"Dear Mencia," replied he, with an air which ſhewed how much he was concerned at my grief, "I do not complain of you, and am very far from upbraiding you with the flouriſhing condition I find you in; I rejoice at it. Ever ſince I left Valladolid fortune has been againſt me: my life has been a continual ſeries of miſery; and nothing made me more miſerable than the want of an opportunity o ſend you news of me, and to hear from you. I knew how you loved me, and had always in my mind the ſad ſtate to which that ove had reduced you. I repreſented you to my eyes always in tears; and my concern for you was ever my greateſt trouble: ſometimes blamed myſelf for having been the occaſion f making you ſo wretched; and even wiſhed hat you had given yourſelf to one of my rivals, ſince your preferring me to them had

coſt

coſt you ſo dear. However, after ſeven years ſufferings, and doting on you ſtill as much as ever, I could not help deſiring to ſee you; and having finiſhed a long ſlavery, I went in this diſguiſe to Valladolid, where I was like to be diſcovered. I there learned every thing: thence I came to this caſtle, found a way to come at the gardener, and entered myſelf in his ſervice, in hopes that, as I wrought in the garden, I might have an opportunity to ſee you; but don't think that by my abode here I have the leaſt deſign to interrupt your happineſs. I love you more than I love myſelf. I am pleaſed to ſee you ſo happy, and the pleaſure I ſhall take to reflect on the condition I leave you in, will be the only comfort of a life which I ſhall now ſpend far from you, and return no more to trouble your repoſe." "No, no, Don Alvar," cried I, at theſe words, "I will not ſuffer you to leave me a ſecond time, I will go with you: nothing but death ſhall now part us." "Hearken to me," replied he, "live ſtill with Don Ambroſio; let me be wretched by myſelf." A great many other things he ſaid of the ſame nature; but the more ready he was to ſacrifice himſelf for me, the leſs willing was I to let him. When he found that I was determined to go away with him, he on a ſudden altered his tone, and looking very well pleaſed upon me, ſaid, "Madam, ſince you ſtill love Don Alvar ſo well, as to prefer his miſery to the proſperity you enjoy here, we will go to Betancos, at the farther end of the kingdom of Galicia, where

I have a ſecure retreat prepared for us. If my misfortunes have deprived me of all my eſtate, they have not alſo deprived me of all my friends: I have ſome left who have enabled me to carry you off with me. I have, by their aſſiſtance, got a coach ready at Zamora. I have bought mules, and am attended with three ſtout Galicians, armed with carabines and piſtols: they wait my orders in the village of Rodillas: let us take hold of this occaſion, the abſence of Don Ambroſio: I will fetch the coach, and we will be gone this moment." I conſented to his propoſal. Don Alvar flew to Rodillas, and in a little while returned with his three Galicians. I was with my woman when he came with the coach: he took me in his arms, and put me into it. My woman ran away in a fright, Ines only ſtaying near me; but ſhe would not go along with us, becauſe ſhe was in love with one of Don Ambroſio's valets.

I carried off only my cloaths, and what jewels I had before my ſecond marriage. I took nothing that belonged to the Marquis, or what he had given me. We travelled towards Galicia, under apprehenſions of being purſued by Don Ambroſio. We continued our journey two days together without any oppoſition: we were in hopes to do the ſame the third; and were diſcourſing very agreeably of his adventure, and of what happened to Don Alvar in his abſence; how he had been a ſlave five years; and what it was that occaſioned the report of his death, when yeſterday, on the

the road to Leon, we met the robbers who were with you. It was he you killed, and the three men were his Galicians: it is for him that these tears flow from mine eyes. Saying this, she burst out a-weeping; and Gil Blas could not help bearing her company.

CHAP. XII.

How disagreeably Gil Blas and the lady were interrupted.

WHen her grief permitted her to hear what I had to offer, I asked her what she intended to do in the present conjuncture; and as she was about to answer me, we were interrupted by a great noise in the inn. The corregidor was come thither with several sergeants, and other officers: they entered our chamber; a young gentleman that was with them coming up to me, looked very curiously upon me; and examining my dress, cried out "By St James, he has my coat on: it is he himself: take hold of him; he has my horse too; he is one of the thieves that lurk in the country." By this I understood that the young cavalier was the gentleman who had been robbed by them, and whose spoils I had unluckily equipped myself with. The corregidor, who, by my confusion, imagined that I was the person the gentleman took me for, and that the lady was an accomplice, sent us to separate prisons. This magistrate was not one of those whose frightful looks are death

a criminal: he had a ſoft ſmiling air, God knows if he was the better man for it. As ſoon as I was lodged in priſon, he came thither attended by his officers; the firſt thing they did, was to plunder me, according to cuſtom. I was a fine booty for them; they never had a better: as often as they dived into my pockets, I perceived their eyes ſparkled with joy; the corregidor could hardly contain himſelf. "Child," ſays he, "fear nothing; we only do our duty: if you are innocent, no harm will come to you." They were all the while emptying my pockets, and took from me even what the robbers paid more reſpect to, the forty ducats given me by my uncle. This did not ſatisfy them. They ſtripped me to my ſhirt, to ſee whether I had hid any thing between that and my ſkin. When they had thus done their duty, as they ſaid, the corregidor examined me. I told him ingenuouſly all that had happened to me. He took my examination in writing. He then departed with his crew about him, and my money and goods in their cuſtody, leaving me naked in ſome foul ſtraw in the priſon.

"What is human life!" cried I to myſelf, when I reflect on my forlorn ſtate: "how full of croſſes and loſſes! I have met with nothing elſe ſince I left Oviedo: I am ſcarce got out of one peril, but another befals me. I little thought when I arrived in this city that I ſhould ſo ſoon become acquainted with the corregidor." I curſed the fatal coat as I put it on again, and the reſt of the equipage that

was left me which I brought from the robbers' ſubterranean dwellings. At laſt I encouraged myſelf with other reflections. "Have a good heart, Gil Blas," ſaid I; "does it become thee to deſpair in a common jail, after thou hadſt patience in thy dark confinement among the thieves? but alas, what ſignifies it to take courage? how can I get hence? they have deprived me of all means of procuring my liberty, by taking my money from me, without which a priſoner is like a bird whoſe wings are clipped."

Inſtead of the fowl I had ordered to the fire, they brought me ſome bread and water. I was fifteen days in my hole without ſeeing any body but the jailor, who gave me my allowance of that thin diet. I did what I could to have ſome diſcourſe with him, but he would not ſpeak a word with me. He came in and out, and would not often ſo much as look upon me. The ſixteenth day the corregidor appeared, and ſaid, "Rejoice, young man, I bring thee glad tidings; I have cauſed the lady that was with thee to be conducted to Burgos: I examined her before ſhe went, and her anſwer will diſcharge thee. Thou ſhalt to-day have thy liberty, provided the muleteer, who, as thou ſaidſt, brought thee from Penaflor to Cacabelos, confirms thy depoſition; he is now in Aſtorga, I will ſend for him. If he agrees in the article of the torture, I will diſcharge thee immediately." I was overjoyed to hear him talk thus. I did not doubt of my liberty, and thanked him for his readineſs

to do me ſpeedy juſtice. I had hardly finiſhed my compliment, when the muleteer entered to us, attended by two ſerjeants. I preſently knew him again; but the rogue having ſold my portmanteau, and all that was in it, and fearing he ſhould be obliged to make me ſatisfaction, if he owned that he knew me, ſaid very impudently he had never ſeen me in his life before. "Ah traitor," ſaid I; "confeſs rather that thou haſt ſold my cloaths, and bear witneſs to the truth: look on me; I am one of the young men whom thou threatenedſt with the torture at Cacabelos, and whom thou puttest in ſuch a fright." The muleteer replied very gravely, he knew nothing of the matter; and perſiſting in diſowning any knowledge of me, my deliverance was put off to ſome other time. Patience was to be my cure again; the jailor's bread and water my diet. It was an intolerable thing to be there without having committed the leaſt crime. But what help was there for it? I wiſhed I had laid under ground ſtill: I was more at eaſe here, ſaid I to myſelf, than in this priſon; I fared well with the robbers: we lived merrily; and I comforted myſelf ſtill with hopes of eſcaping, whereas, innocent as I am, perhaps the beſt of my fortune will be to be let out hence, to go to the galleys.

CHAP. XIII.

By what chance Gil Blas was delivered out of priſon, and whither he went.

WHile I was ſpending my time upon theſe reflections, the ſtory of my adventures, as it was contained in my depoſition, was reported about the town, ſeveral perſons came out of curioſity to ſee me: they ſtood one after another at a little window, by which the light came into my priſon; and when they had gazed at me ſome time, they marched their way. I was ſurpriſed at this novelty: I had not till then ſeen a mortal at the window ſince my confinement. I imagined that I was talked of in the city; and could not tell whether it was for the better or the worſe.

One of thoſe that came to ſee me, happened to be the little quiriſter of Mondonedo, who, as well as I, had been afraid of the rack, and taken to his heels to avoid it. I knew him, and he knew me: we ſaluted one another, and entered afterwards into a long converſation. I was obliged to give him a full account of all my adventures; and he told me what paſſed in the inn at Cacabelos between the muleteer, and the young woman; in ſhort, he informed me of every thing I have ſaid concerning it; and promiſed, when he took leave of me, that he would that minute go and labour for my deliverance. The every body who came to my window out of curioſity

curioſity, as well as he, expreſſed themſelves to have pity on my ſufferings, and aſſured me they would join with him in endeavouring to procure my liberty.

They were as good as their word: they ſpoke to the corregidor on my behalf. That magiſtrate made no more doubt of my innocence, eſpecially after he had heard what the quiriſter had to ſay. Three weeks after he appeared in my priſon again, and ſaid, "Gil Blas, not to keep thee in pain, thou mayſt go whither thou wilt. But tell me, doſt thou think, if we ſend ſome ſerjeant and others with thee to the foreſt, thou couldſt find out that habitation under ground?" "No, my Lord," replied I; "it was night always when I entered it, and never came out but before day: it is impoſſible for me to diſcover it." Then the corregidor left me, ſaying he would order the jailor to open the priſon-doors for me. The jailor and his turnkey entered my hole ſoon after; and having taken from me the little I had left, which they liked better than their own, they exchanged cloaths with me; and turned me out of the priſon by the head and ſhoulders. I was aſhamed to be ſeen in the rags they had given me inſtead of my cloaths; and my confuſion leſſened the joy priſoners have uſually when they are ſet at liberty.

I would fain have gone out of town, and avoided being gazed at by the people; but my gratitude would not let me go, without taking leave of the quiriſter, to whom I

was ſo much obliged. I went and returned him my thanks: he could not help laughing at ſeeing me. "You have fared very indifferently," ſays he, "in the hands of juſtice." "I do not complain of it," replied I; "juſtice is always right; I wiſh only that the officers that belonged to it were honeſt men. I think they ſhould at leaſt have let me have my cloaths: they would have been well enough paid by my money. "Very true," ſaid he; "but it ſeems the formalities of their office required it, and they call it doing their duty. How, I pray, do they do this duty of theirs? is the horſe you had reſtored to the right owner? no ſurely, he is now in the ſerjeant's ſtable that took him from you, to be a proof of the robbery there: the poor gentleman that owns it will not, I believe, have ſo much as the crupper reſtored to him. But to ſay no more of this; what do you intend to do?" "I have a mind," replied I, "to go to Burgos, and find out the lady whom I delivered out of the hands of the robbers: ſhe will give me ſome piſtoles; I will buy me a new gown, and go to Salamanca, where I hope to make ſomething of my Latin: the worſt of it is, it is a great way to Burgos, and I have nothing to maintain me on the road. "I underſtand you," ſaid my companion, "my purſe is at your ſervice; it is a little low indeed, but we will do as well as we can with it." Saying this, he pulled it out of his pocket, and gave it me with ſo good a grace, that I could not refuſe accepting of it, ſuch

as

as it was; and gave him a thouſand thanks, and promiſed to be always ready to do as much for him, when it lay in my way, which it never did. I took my leave of him, and departed from the city without viſiting the other perſons who had contributed to my deliverance. I contented myſelf with heartily wiſhing them well. My friend's purſe was, as he ſaid, a little low. It was well for me that I had lately been uſed to a very frugal way of living. I could not have made it hold out elſe. I was ſo good a huſband that I had ſome reals left me when I arrived at Ponte de Mula, which is not far from Burgos: I went into an inn, and was accoſted by the hoſteſs. She was an ugly ſcolding dame; and I perceived ſhe did not like me by my appearance. I mattered it not, ſat down, and called for ſome bread and cheeſe. The wine they brought me was deteſtable. While I was eating, I would fain have entered into converſation with my landlady: I deſired her to tell me if ſhe knew the Marquis de la Guardia; if his ſeat was near; and what ſhe heard of the Marchioneſs his wife? "You aſk me abundance of queſtions," replied ſhe, with an air of contempt: however, after a rude manner, ſhe told me Don Ambroſio's houſe was but a league from Ponte Mula.

Having ſupped as well as my purſe afforded, I bade them ſhew me a chamber. "You chamber!" ſaid the hoſteſs very ſcornfully: "I cannot ſpare a room for ſuch as ſup on a bit of bread. All my beds are taken up; I expect

expect ſeveral gentlemen of faſhion to-night: you may lie in the barn if you will: I ſuppoſe it is not the firſt time." She was in the right of it. I made her no anſwer, but went to the barn, laid myſelf down on ſome ſtraw, and ſlept as ſoundly as a man that was heartily tired.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the reception Donna Mencia gave him at Burgos.

I Did not lie long next morning, I went to my landlady to count with her; and ſhe was in a better humour than I left her in over-night. I imputed it to the company of three of St Hermandad's bailiffs who were very familiar with her: they had lain in our inn that night; and I doubt not but it was for theſe gentlemen that all the beds were taken up. I aſked the way, when I came into the village, for Don Ambroſio's caſtle. By chance I met with a man of the ſame character as my landlord at Penafler: he did not only tell me the way to the caſtle, but that Don Ambroſio had been dead three weeks, and the Marchioneſs his wife was retired into a convent at Burgos. I directed my ſteps towards that city, inſtead of taking the road to the caſtle, as I at firſt deſigned: and made what haſte I could to the monaſtery where Donna Mencia lived. I prayed the doorkeeper to tell the lady that a young man newly come out of the priſon at Aſtorga deſired

to

to ſee her. The door-keeper told her immediately, and when ſhe came back conducted me into a hall, where I was not long before Don Ambroſio's widow appeared at the grate in very deep mourning. "You are welcome," ſaid the lady: "four days ago I wrote to a perſon at Aſtorga to go to you, and acquaint you, that as ſoon as you got out of priſon, I deſired you to come hither. I doubted not you would not be long detained there. I ſaid enough to the corregidor in your behalf to diſcharge you. The anſwer I received was, that you had had your liberty, but they did not know what was become of you. I was afraid I ſhould never ſee you more, nor ever have the ſatisfaction to make you a return for the obligations I have to you. Do not be caſt down," ſaid ſhe, perceiving I was out of countenance, at appearing before her in ſo ſorry a garb; "do not be concerned at your dreſs. After the ſervice you have done me, I ſhould be the moſt ungrateful of women if I did nothing for you: I will deliver you out of the miſerable ſtate you are now in: I ought to do it, and I can do it. I have wealth enough to diſcharge myſelf towards you, as obliged by gratitude, without ſtraitening myſelf.

"You know," continued ſhe, "my adventures till the time that we were both impriſoned: I will now accquaint you with what happened afterwards, when the corregidor's people had conducted me to Burgos from Aſtorga. After I had told him my whole

whole ſtory, I went to Don Ambroſio's caſtle. My return occaſioned a great ſurpriſe; but they informed me there that I came too late; that the Marquis was ſo troubled at my flight, that he was fallen ſick, and the phyſicians deſpaired of his life. I had now a freſh occaſion to complain of my ſtars; however I bade them to acquaint him with my arrival. They did ſo: I went to his chamber with my eyes full of tears, and my heart full of grief. "What brought you here?" ſaid he as ſoon he ſaw me: "are you come to glory in the ſight of a work of your own making? are you not ſatisfied with having taken my life from me? muſt your eyes too be the witneſſes of my death?" "My Lord," replied I, "Ines ought to have informed you, that I fled with my firſt huſband; and had it not been for a very dreadful accident which befel us, you ſhould never have ſeen me more." I then told him how Don Alvar was killed by the robbers, and how I was carried afterwards to an habitation under ground; how I was delivered thence, and what happened to me ſince. When I had done ſpeaking, Don Ambroſio held out his hand to me, and ſaid with a tender air, "It is enough; I ceaſe to complain of you: indeed what reaſon have I to reproach you? you met with a huſband whom you dearly loved: you left me to go with him: can I blame you for that? no, Madam, I ſhould be in the wrong to complain: I would not ſuffer you to be purſued: I conſidered the ſacred rights of your raviſher, and your inclination

clination for him. In fine, I did you juſtice; and by you return hither you recover all my affections. Yes, my dear Mencia, the ſight of you fills me with joy; but alas! I cannot long enjoy it; I find my laſt hour approaches: you are no ſooner reſtored to me, than I muſt bid you an eternal adieu." Theſe words were ſo moving, that they made my tears flow afreſh, and my ſoul to diſſolve with immoderate ſorrow. I could not help weeping aloud; and queſtioned whether I wept more for the death of Don Alvar whom I adored. Don Ambroſio had not a falſe alarm of his death: he died next day, and I became miſtreſs of the conſiderable eſtate he ſettled upon me at our marriage. I ſhall not make an ill uſe of it. And though I am ſtill young, nobody ſhall ever ſee me in the arms of a third huſband. Beſides that, in my opinion, it looks indecent and immodeſt to be thrice married. I am reſolved to end my days in a convent, and become a beneſactreſs."

Having finiſhed her diſcourſe thus, ſhe pulled a purſe from under her gown, which ſhe gave me, ſaying, "There is a hundred ducats which I give you to equip yourſelf; only when you have done it, come and ſee me again. I do not intend to confine my gratitude to ſo narrow a compaſs." I gave the lady a thouſand thanks, and ſwore to her I would not leave Burgos without waiting on her. After this oath, which I had no inclination to break, I went and looked out for an inn; I entered the firſt I came to, aſked

for

for a room, and that the landlord might not have an ill opinion of me by the figure I made, I let him know I had wherewithal to pay my reckoning. At theſe words Majuelo my hoſt ſurveyed me from head to foot; and being a wag, made anſwer, that he had no need of ſuch aſſurance from me, to let him know that I ſhould be a good gueſt to his houſe; that he ſaw ſomething noble in me, through the diſadvantage of my dreſs, and doubted not but I was a gentleman of ſubſtance. I found the rogue bantered me; and to put an end to his raillery, I ſhewed him my purſe, told out the hundred ducats, and perceived that the ſight of the gold diſpoſed him to a more favourable judgment of me. I deſired him to ſend a tailor to me; he ſaid, it would be better to have a broker, who would bring all ſorts of cloaths, and equip me immediately. I approved of his counſel, and reſolved to follow it; but it growing towards night, I put off doing it till morning, and ordered ſupper to be got ready as ſoon as poſſible, reſolving to make amends for my bad living ever ſince I came out of my ſubterranean dwelling.

CHAP. XV.

How Gil Blas dreſſed himſelf. Of another preſent the lady made him, and in what equipage he departed from Burgos.

THE waiters ſerved me a fricaſſee of ſheep's trotters, which I almoſt devoured

ed whole. I drank in proportion to what I ate, and then went to bed, and it being a pretty good one, I was in hopes that I ſhould have ſlept all night, and made but one nap of it. Inſtead of which, I could not ſleep a wink for thinking of my new cloaths, and what I ſhould do afterwards. I could not tell what garb to wear; ſometimes I was for buying a gown, and equipping myſelf for Salamanca; ſometimes for taking orders. But at laſt I found the world prevailed, and I reſolved to make my fortune in it. In order to which, my purpoſe was to put on a ſword, and ſet myſelf out like a gentleman. I was impatient for day-light, and as ſoon as it appeared I got up. I made ſuch a noiſe in the inn, that I awaked all about me. I knocked up the waiters, who curſed me for my pains; but they could not help riſing, and I would not let them be at reſt till they had brought me a broker, which was done in a minute; he came, attended with two boys, who brought each a green bundle. Their maſter ſaluted me very civilly, ſaying, "Signior, it was your very good luck to light of me: however, I would not run down my brethren: I would, by no means, injure their reputation, but, between you and me, there is not one of them who has a conſcience: they are all as hard as Jews: I am the only broker who has a grain of honeſty. I am contented with a reaſonable profit: a penny in the pound is all I deſire; thank my ſtars I love fair dealing."

After this preamble, which I took all for goſpel, like a fool as I was, he bade his boys to open their bundles. He ſhewed me ſuits of all ſorts of colours, and ſome that were plain; but I rejected the latter with diſdain, they were too modeſt for me. He at laſt made me try on one, which fitted me exactly every way; the coat was of blue velvet embroidered with gold, and the cloak of the ſame. I liked it mightily, though it had been worn, and aſked the price of it. The broker perceiving I had taken a fancy to it, ſaid, I had a very good choice. "By my faith," cried he, "you underſtand theſe things. This ſuit was made for one of the greateſt lords of the kingdom; he never had it on but thrice. Examine the velvet, nothing can be finer: and as for the embroidery, never was any thing better wrought." "How much will it coſt?" replied I. "Sixty ducats," ſaid he: "I have refuſed it, as I am an honeſt man." I offered him five and forty, which was as much again as the ſuit was worth. "Signior," replied the broker, "I will make but one word with you. See ſome of theſe ſuits," continued he, pointing to thoſe I had rejected, "I will ſell them to you much cheaper." This made me the more eager for that I had pitched upon, and imagining that he would not bate any thing, I told him out ſixty ducats. When he ſaw I was ſo eaſy, as honeſt a man as he was, I perceived he was ſorry he had not demanded more for it. However, contenting himſelf with his penny in the

the pound, he took my money, and departed with his two boys, whom I ſhall never forget.

I had now got a handſome ſuit and cloak; the next thing was to buy linen, hat, ſhoes, ſtockings, and a ſword; which done, I put them all on, and was wonderfully delighted to ſee myſelf ſo equipped: I was never ſatisfied with ſurveying myſelf; never was peacock prouder of his feathers. I went the ſame day, and paid a ſecond viſit to Donna Mencia, who received me as graciouſly as ſhe had done at the firſt: ſhe thanked me again for the ſervice I had done her, and abundance of compliments paſſed on both ſides. She then wiſhed me all happineſs, and bade me farewell, giving me only a ring worth about thirty piſtoles, when ſhe left me, praying me to keep it for her ſake. I was very much balked at this preſent, expecting ſomething better than a ring; and not at all contented with the lady's generoſity, I returned to my inn very thoughtful. But, as I entered it, a man followed me, and throwing open his cloak, ſhewed a huge bag which had the appearance of a money-bag: and, at the ſight of it, I ſtared greedily upon it, as did all preſent. As for me, I thought I heard the voice of a ſeraphim, who, laying the bag upon a table, ſaid to me, "Signior Gil Blas, this is what Madam the Marchioneſs has ſent you." I bowed very reverently to the bearer, I confounded him with my civilities; and as ſoon as he was got out of the inn, threw myſelf on

the money-bag, like a hawk on his prey. I carried it to my chamber, opened it, and found therein a thouſand ducats: I had juſt done counting them, when my hoſt, who heard what the bearer had ſaid to me, entered my chamber to ſee what was in the bag. He was ſurpriſed at the ſight of ſo many ducats lying on the table. "What a duce," ſays he, "is all this money yours? you muſt know how to pleaſe the women ſure? you have not been twenty-four hours in Burgos, and have already marchioneſſes under contributions."

This diſcourſe did not diſpleaſe me: I was tempted to leave Majuelo in his miſtake. It flattered my vanity. I do not wonder young men love to be thought in the good graces of the ladies. But I was more innocent than vain. I undeceived my landlord: I told him the ſtory of Donna Mencia; to which he liſtened very attentively. I conſulted him what was beſt for me to do in my preſent circumſtances, the man ſeeming to be in my intereſt. He ſtood ſilent ſome time, and then anſwered ſeriouſly: "Signior Gil Blas, I have a love for you; and ſince you put ſo much truſt in me, as to open yourſelf ſo frankly, I will tell you plainly what I think you had beſt do. You ſeem to be made for a court: I adviſe you to endeavour to get into the ſervice of ſome great lord, and either to gain his confidence, by ſerving him in his intereſts, or in his pleaſures. If you do not do that, you loſe your time. I know ſome perſons of quality

quality that do not care a farthing for the zeal of an honeſt man; they mind nobody that is not neceſſary to them. You have another way left ſtill: You are young, handſome; and if you had no wit, that would be enough to gain you ſome rich widow, or ſome pretty woman unhappily married. If love ruins men who have eſtates, it often makes thoſe that want them. I think you will therefore do well to go to Madrid; but I would not adviſe you to go alone. People judge by appearances, and you will be looked upon according to the figure you make. I will help you to a valet, an honeſt fellow, and as handy a one as any in Spain. Buy two mules, one for yourſelf, and another for him, and depart as ſoon as you can."

The counſel was too agreeable to my humour for me to neglect it. I bought two mules the next day, and hired the valet he ſpoke of: he was about thirty years old, and appeared to be a plain downright fellow. He ſaid he was a native of Galicia, and his name *Ambroſe de Lamela*. Whereas other ſervants haggle about their wages, he was contented with any thing, and I thought he would take it as a favour if I would let him ſerve me for nothing. I bought alſo ſome boots, and a portmanteau, paid my reckoning, and on the morrow departed before ſun-riſing from Burgos to Madrid.

CHAP. XVI.

Shewing that one ought not to make too ſure of proſperity.

WE lay the firſt night at Duenas, and arrived the ſecond at Valladolid, about four o' clock in the afternoon. We alighted at an inn which looked to be one of the beſt of the town. I left the care of the mules to my valet, and went to a room, which was ſhewn me by one of the ſervants of the houſe, who carried my portmanteau. Finding myſelf tired, I threw myſelf down on the bed, without pulling my boots off; I fell aſleep, and did not awake till almoſt night, when I called for Ambroſe, but he was not in the inn. He came ſoon after: I aſked him where he had been, and he anſwered, with a holy grimace, at church, to return thanks to Heaven, for having preſerved us from all ill accidents in our journey from Burgos to Valladolid. I approved of what he had been doing, and then bade him get me a pullet for my ſupper. While I was giving him this order, my landlord entered the chamber with a taper in his hand, lighting a lady, who appeared to be more fair than young, and very richly dreſſed, a negro holding up her tail. I was not a little ſurpriſed, when, after having made me a low courteſy, ſhe aſked me, as if by chance, "whither I was not Signior Gil Blas of Santillane?" I no ſooner replied "Yes," than ſhe let go the hand of her gentleman-

gentleman-uſher, to embrace me with a tranſport of joy, which added the more to my ſurpriſe. "Heaven," cried ſhe, "what a happy adventure is this! it is you that I am ſeeking." I then called to mind the paraſite of Penafler, and was about to conclude that this lady was much ſuch another ſort of creature: But what ſhe ſaid afterwards gave me a more favourable opinion of her. "I am," continued ſhe, "couſin-german to Donna Mencia de Moſquera, who is ſo much obliged to you. I this morning received a letter from her, informing me, that underſtanding you were going to Madrid, ſhe deſired me to entertain you, if you paſſed this way. I have been running up and down the city theſe two hours in queſt of you. I went from inn to inn to inquire of all the ſtrangers I ſaw, and, by this hoſt's deſcription of you, I imagined at laſt that you might be the deliverer of my couſin. And now that I have met you, I will let you ſee how ſenſible I am of the ſervice you did my family, and my dear kinſwoman in particular. Pray go with me to my houſe; you will be more commodiouſly lodged there than here." I would have excuſed myſelf, and repreſented to the lady that I ſhould be too troubleſome to her; but ſhe would not be put off. There waited a coach at the gate of the inn; ſhe took care herſelf to ſee my portmanteau put into it, "becauſe," ſaid ſhe, "there are rogues at Valladolid;" which I found too true. In ſhort, I went into the coach with her, and her gentleman-

uſher,

uſher, and was in this manner carried away from the inn, to the great diſlike of my landlord, who loſt the taking of ſo much money as he ſuppoſed I ſhould have ſpent there. After our coach had paſſed through ſeveral ſtreets, it ſtopped. We alighted at a pretty large houſe, and came to an apartment well furniſhed, and illuminated with twenty or thirty ſconces. There were ſeveral ſervants waiting, of whom the lady demanded whether Don Raphael was arrived? They anſwered, No. Then ſhe addreſſed herſelf thus to me: "Signior Gil Blas, I expect my brother to-night from a country-ſeat which we have two leagues off. How agreeably will he be ſurpriſed, to find a man in his houſe, to whom all our family is ſo much obliged!" In the moment ſhe was talking we heard a noiſe, and underſtood it was occaſioned by the arrival of Don Raphael. That gentleman preſently made his appearance. He was a young, handſome, briſk man. "I am overjoyed to ſee you, brother," ſays the lady to him; "you will help me to entertain Signior Gil Blas of Santillane; we can never do enough in return for his ſervices to our couſin Donna Mencia." "Here," added ſhe, offering him a letter, "read what ſhe has written me." Don Raphael opened the billet, and read theſe words out aloud.

DEAR CAMILLA,

SIgnior Gil Blas of Santillane, who ſaved my honour and life, is now going to court;

court; he will doubtleſs paſs by Valladolid. I conjure you, by our relation, and, what is more, by our friendſhip, to entertain him, and keep him ſome time at your houſe. I flatter myſelf that you will give me this ſatisfaction; and that my deliverer will receive of you and my couſin Don Raphael all manner of kind treatment. At Burgos.

Your affectionate Couſin,

DONNA MENCIA.

"How!" ſaid Don Raphael, when he had read the letter, "is this the gentleman to whom my couſin owes both honour and life? Heaven be praiſed for ſo happy a meeting." Saying this, he caught me in his arms: "How do I rejoice," continued he, "in ſeeing here Signior Gil Blas of Santillane! My couſin the Marchioneſs had no need of deſiring us to entertain you: had ſhe only hinted to us that you were to paſs through Valladolid, my ſiſter Camilla and I know our duty too well, not to make much of a perſon who has ſo highly obliged a lady ſo dear to our whole family." I made the beſt anſwer I could to theſe diſcourſes, which were followed by others of the ſame nature, intermixed with a thouſand careſſes. After which, obſerving that I had ſtill my boots on, they ordered their ſervants to take them off.

We then went into another room, where there was a table ſpread: we ſat down, and all their talk at ſupper was as obliging as that before: I could not ſay a word but they were

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taken with it, and were both of them very officious to help me out of every diſh. Don Raphael often drank Donna Mencia's health. I followed his example; and obſerved ſometimes that Camilla, who would have her glaſs too, caſt a look upon me, which had a ſignification in it. I took notice that ſhe would watch her opportunity to do it, as if ſhe was afraid her brother would perceive it. I needed no more to be perſuaded that I was in her favour, and imagined I might make my advantage of it, if I ſtaid ever ſo little while at Valladolid. The hopes of this made me eaſily comply with their requeſt to paſs a few days with them. They thanked me for my complaiſance; and Camilla was ſo glad, that I doubted not of her having found out ſomething amiable in me.

Don Raphael finding that I had determined to ſtay there ſome time, propoſed to carry me to his caſtle. He made a magnificent deſcription of it to me, and enlarged upon the diverſions we ſhould meet with there. "Sometimes," ſays he, "we will hunt, ſometimes fiſh, ſometimes take the air; we have fine woods and delicious gardens; beſides, we ſhall have rare company; I hope you will not be tired there." I accepted of his propoſal; and the next day was appointed for our going to that fine caſtle of his. Having formed ſo agreeable a deſign, we roſe from the table. Don Raphael ſeemed to be tranſported; "Signior Gil Blas," ſaid he, embracing me, "I leave you with my ſiſter; I

am

am going this minute to give the neceſſary orders, and invite the perſons that ſhall be of our company." At theſe words he went out. I continued the converſation with the lady, whoſe diſcourſe was of apiece with her looks; ſhe took me by the hand, and caſt her eyes upon my ring: "That is a fine diamond," ſays ſhe: "do you underſtand ſtones?" I replied, "No." "I am ſorry," ſaid the lady; "for you might then have told me what this is worth." She then ſhewed me a large ruby ſhe had on her finger; and while I was looking on it, added, "An uncle of mine, governour of the Philippine iſlands belonging to the Spaniards, gave it to me. The jewellers of Valladolid value it at about three hundred piſtoles." "I believe they hit it," ſaid I, "it is extremely fine." "Since you like it," replied ſhe, "I will truck with you." She then took my ring, and put her own on my little finger. I thought this way of making a preſent very gallant. She after this ſqueezed me by the hand, and giving me a tender glance, broke off the converſation of a ſudden, bade me good night, and retired in confuſion, as if ſhe had been aſhamed to have diſcovered her ſentiments to me in that manner.

Though I was a novice in gallantry, I imagined that her going away ſo haſtily boded well for me; and that I ſhould not ſpend my time ill in the country. Full of theſe pleaſing fancies, and the happy ſtate of my affairs, I ſhut myſelf up in the chamber where I was

to

to lie, having bid my valet call me early in the morning. Inſtead of ſleeping, I ſweetly meditated on the portmanteau that lay on the table, and the ruby that I had on my finger. "Thank Heaven," ſaid I to myſelf, "I was once unfortunate; I am not ſo now: here is a ring worth three hundred piſtoles; there's a thouſand ducats in gold; theſe will laſt me a long while. Majuelo, I find, did not flatter me: the ladies of Madrid will receive me very kindly, ſince Camilla is already ſo gracious to me." I was charmed by the bounty of that generous lady, and my head full of the diverſions I was to have with Don Raphael at his caſtle. However, as delightful as theſe ideas were to me, ſleep at laſt overtook me; and when I awoke next morning, I found that the day was pretty well ſpent. I was ſurpriſed that my ſervant had not called me, according to my order. "My faithful Ambroſe," ſaid I to myſelf, "is either at church, or he is very lazy to-day." But I had not ſo good an opinion of him long; for getting up, and miſſing my portmanteau, I ſuſpected he had robbed me of it in the night. To ſatisfy myſelf in the matter, I opened my chamber-door, and called the hypocrite ſeveral times. Upon which an old man came to me, and "aſked what I wanted?" adding, "All your people went away this morning before day; there is not one of them in my houſe." "How! your houſe!" cried I; "is not this Don Raphael's?" "I know no ſuch man," ſaid he; "you are in a lodging-houſe: the lady

lady who ſupped with you laſt night came to us yeſterday in the evening, and hired this apartment for a great lord who travelled *incognito*, and paid me beforehand.

This was enough for me. I preſently perceived what ſort of people Camilla and Don Raphael were; and that my valet, having fully informed himſelf of my affairs, had ſold me to thoſe cheats. Inſtead of blaming myſelf for this ſad accident, and thinking that it would not have happened to me, if I had not had the indiſcretion of opening myſelf to Majuelo without any manner of neceſſity, I laid all the fault on innocent fortune, and a hundred times curſed my ſtars. The landlord of the lodgings, to whom I told the adventure, appeared to be very ſenſible of the concern I was in. He pitied me, and ſaid he was ſorry ſuch a thing ſhould happen in his houſe: but, notwithſtanding all his pretences, I doubt not but he had as great ſhare of the villany and booty as my landlord at Burgos, to whom I imputed the honour of the contrivance.

CHAP. XVII.

What Gil Blas did after the adventure of the lodging-houſe.

WHen I had enough deplored my misfortune, I conſidered that I ought rather to bear up againſt it, than ſuffer myſelf to be depreſſed by it. I took heart, and ſaid to myſelf, as I was putting on my cloaths, "It

is well the rogues have not taken them too. I have ſome ducats ſtill in my pockets." They had been ſo merciful to me as that came to, and had alſo left my boots, which I gave to my landlord for a third part of what they coſt me. I then left his houſe, without bidding adieu to any one in it, having occaſion for nobody to carry my luggage for me. The firſt thing I did, was, to ſee whether my mules were at the inn, where I left them the day before. I gueſſed that Ambroſe had taken them with him, and I wiſh I had always made ſo right a judgment of him. I learned that he carried them off the evening before. So, never thinking to ſee them or my portmanteau again, I walked up and down the ſtreets, pondering in my mind what I ſhould do next.

I was tempted to return to Burgos, to have a ſecond recourſe to Donna Mencia; but I thought again that would be to impoſe upon that lady's bounty, and ſhe would look upon me as a ſot: ſo I gave over that deſign. I ſwore alſo that I would for the future be upon my guard againſt women, and would not truſt even the chaſte Suſannah. I every now and then caſt my eyes upon my ring, and reflecting that it was a preſent of Camilla's, I ſighed, and ſaid to myſelf, "It is certainly no ruby, and I need not go to a jeweller to be informed that I am a bubble." Nevertheleſs I was willing to know whether it was ſo or not, and ſhewed my ring to an artiſt, who ſaid it was worth three ducats. At this eſtimation,

mation, which I expected, I gave the governour of the Philippine iſlands niece to the devil. As I was going out of the jeweller's ſhop, I met with a young man who ſtopped to take a view of me. I did not call him to mind preſently, though I knew him very well. "How! Gil Blas!" ſays he; "do you make as if you did not know me? Can you in two years time forget the barber Nuñez's ſon? Am I ſo much altered? do you not remember your old playfellow Fabricio, your countryman, and ſchool-fellow, after we have ſo often diſputed together, at Doctor Godinez's, of univerſals, and metaphyſical degrees?" I called him to mind before he had done ſpeaking, and embraced him with a great deal of joy. "I am glad to ſee you, my dear friend," cried I: "I cannot expreſs my tranſport." "But," ſaid he, with a look of ſurpriſe, "how comes it that you are as fine as a prince? a ſword, ſilk ſtockings, an embroidered coat, and velvet cloak? On my word you muſt have had very good luck, ſome old woman or other has been ſo bountiful to you." "Thou art miſtaken," replied I; "things do not go with me ſo ſwimmingly as you imagine." "That ſham will not take," ſays he; "you affect to be diſcreet. Where had you that fine ring upon your finger? tell me that, Monſieur Gil Blas." "From an arrant cheat, dear Fabricio, a jade, that, inſtead of enriching me with her favours, has ruined me by her deceit."

I ſpoke this ſo ſorrowfully, that Fabricio

perceived I had been bubbled; and preſſed me to tell him the matter; which I was ready enough to do. But the ſtory being long, and I being not willing to part with him ſoon, we went into a tavern, to be the more at eaſe. I there told him all that had happened to me ever ſince I left Oviedo. My adventures ſeemed very odd to him; and after he had ſympathized with me in my preſent ſad eſtate, he ſaid, "Come, child, one ſhould never be caſt down in misfortune: when a man of ſenſe is in trouble, he waits with patience for better times. A man, as Cicero ſays, ſhould never be ſo depreſſed in his mind, as to forget he is a man. For my part, that is my temper. My misfortunes have not ſunk me; I am ſtill above ill fate: for inſtance, I loved a girl of a good family in Oviedo, and I was beloved by her; I aſked her parents conſent: they refuſed me. Another man would have hanged or drowned himſelf. What do you think I did? I ſtole her, and carried her off with me. She was briſk, blunt, and a coquet. Her humour wore off my paſſion: I travelled up and down in the kingdom of Galicia ſix months with her. Thence I would have gone a voyage to ſea; but ſhe would needs go to Portugal, and take with her another companion. This would alſo have made ſome men deſperate. I bore up under it, and wiſer than Menelaus, inſtead of taking arms againſt the Paris who had robbed me of my Helen, I was glad he took a plague from me, which I was willing

ing enough to get rid of. After this, not caring to return to the Aſturias; and having a controverſy with the judges, I proceeded to the kingdom of Leon, ſpending in every town I came to, the money I had left, part of what I brought off with my damſel; for we took as much both of us as we could get at our coming from Oviedo. When I arrived at Palencia I had but one ducat, which I was obliged to change for a pair of ſhoes, and a few reals, that were not like to laſt me long. I therefore reſolved to go to ſervice, and hired myſelf to a linendraper, who had a rake to his ſon. I fared well enough here; but had a difficult taſk how to carry myſelf. The father ordered me to watch his ſon; the ſon deſired me to help to cheat his father. Which ſhould I do? why, truly I preferred the one's deſire to the other's order, and was turned out of doors for ſo doing. I then got into the ſervice of an old painter, who out of kindneſs would teach me his art; but then he ſtarved me into the bargain, which gave me a diſguſt of painting and Palencia; whence I came to Valladolid, where, by the greateſt luck in the world, I was hired by the ſteward of an hoſpital. I live with him ſtill, and have a rare place of it. Signior Manuel Ordonnez, my maſter, is a man of profound piety: it is ſaid that from his youth he has minded nothing elſe but relieving the poor: the pains he has taken has met with their reward: every thing proſpers with him; and by looking after the poor, he is himſelf grown rich."

Fabricio having finiſhed his diſcourſe, I ſaid to him, "I am glad you like your condition ſo well; but, between you and me, methinks you may do better in the world." "Thou art miſtaken, Gil Blas," replied he, "a man of my humour can never do better than I do. To be a lackey, is not grateful to ſome men: but a lad of wit will find it full of charms. A man of a ſuperiour genius never does his buſineſs in ſervice ſo well as one of us merry fellows. We rather command, than obey: we begin with ſtudying our maſter well; we get his blind ſide, and then lead him where we liſt. Thus have I behaved myſelf with my ſteward; I found him out immediately, that he would fain paſs for a ſaint, and I pretended to take him for ſuch a one, carrying myſelf towards him accordingly. I copied after him, acted the ſame part, deceived the deceiver, and am his fac-totum. I hope one time or other to acquire, under his auſpices, the care of the poor alſo, and then I doubt not but to make my fortune as well as he has done, for I find I have the ſame itch after riches."

"Fine hopes theſe, dear Fabricio," replied I; "and I felicitate you upon them. As for me, I will reſume my firſt deſign; I will turn my embroidered coat into a gown, go to Salamanca, liſt myſelf under the banner of the univerſity, and take on me the office of a preceptor." "A hopeful project!" cries Fabricio; "a pleaſant fancy! Wouldſt thou be ſo mad as to turn pedant at this age? Doſt thou know

know what thou art about to undertake? As ſoon as thou art placed there, all the college will obſerve thee, they will have a watchful eye on thy leaſt actions: thou muſt inceſſantly put a conſtraint on thyſelf: thy exteriour muſt be all hypocritical; and thou muſt, in appearance, be poſſeſſed of all the virtues. Eternally muſt thou be chiding thy ſcholar, and ſpend thy time in teaching him Latin, and reproving him when he ſays or does any thing againſt decency. After all this toil and trouble, what will be the fruit of thy care? If the young gentleman takes ill courſes, they will ſay thou ſpoileſt him; and thou ſhalt have nothing for thy pains, not perhaps ſo much as the poor ſalary they were to give thee. Prithee talk no more of the office of a preceptor; a lackey's place is worth ten of it: it is a fine cure: if a maſter has vices, a good genius will know how to humour them, and make his advantage of them. A valet lives at his eaſe; he eats and drinks his fill, ſleeps ſoundly, and has no care to diſturb him."

"I ſhould never have done, child," purſued he, "if I ſhould go about to tell thee all the advantages of a valet. Truſt me, Gil Blas, do as I do." "Ah Fabricio," replied I, "one cannot meet with a ſteward of an hoſpital every day; and when I accept of a valet's place, I am reſolved it ſhall be a good one." "You ſay right," ſaid he, "and leave that to me: I will anſwer for it; and if I hinder a gallant man's throwing himſelf away

way at the univerſity, I ſhall have done a meritorious act."

The poverty with which I was threatened, and Fabricio's contented look prevailing upon me more than his reaſons, I determined to enter into ſome ſervice. We then left the tavern; and my countryman ſaid, "I will this minute carry thee to a man to whom moſt of the valets that want places apply themſelves. There are intelligence-offices where one can at any time hear of a place: this man keeps one: he has informers that acquaint him with whatever is done in a family: he knows who wants valets, and keeps an exact regiſter not only of vacant places, but alſo of the good and the bad qualities of the maſter: he has a brother in ſome convent; and, in a word, it was he who helped me to my place."

We were entertaining ourſelves with this intelligence-office, when the barber Nunnez's ſon brought me to a little houſe, where we found a man of about fifty writing at a table. We ſaluted him with a great deal of reſpect; but whether or not he was ſurly in his nature, or being uſed to ſee nobody but valets, had accuſtomed himſelf to that rude manner, he did not riſe off from his ſeat, he nodded his head, and that was all: however he looked upon me very attentively. I ſaw he was ſurpriſed that a young man in an embroidered velvet coat ſhould turn lackey: he had more reaſon to think I came to look out for one; but he was not long in ſuſpenſe: Fabricio ſaying to him,

"Signior

"Signior Arias de Londonna, I have brought one of my beſt friends to you; he is a lad who was well born, but misfortunes have reduced him to the neceſſity of ſerving: help him to a good place; and depend upon it, he will be very grateful to you." "So you all cry, Gentlemen. Before you have a place you make the faireſt promiſes in the world; but when you have got it, you think no more of them." "I hope," replied Fabricio, "you have no reaſon to complain of me: have not I done handſomely by you?" "You might have done better," ſaid Arias; "your place is as good as a clerk's in the treaſury, and you paid me as if I had put you with an author." I thought it was now time for me to ſpeak, and gave Signior Arias to underſtand, that, to ſhow I was not ungrateful, I would give him a gratuity beforehand. Accordingly I put my hand in my pocket, and took out two ducats, with a promiſe not to ſtop there if I was well placed.

He ſeemed very well pleaſed with my proceedings, and cried, "Ay, this is ſomething like! I love every one ſhould deal ſo with me. There are ſome excellent places vacant," continued he; "I will name them to you, and do you chuſe for yourſelf." Saying this, he put on his ſpectacles, opened a regiſter which lay on his table, turned over ſome leaves, and read as follows: "Captain Torbellino, a paſſionate, whimſical man, wants a valet: he is always ſwearing, and beats his ſervants ſo, that he cripples them." "That will not do," cried

cried I, "go on to another; I don't like this captain." Arias ſmiled at my quickneſs, and read on again: "Donna Manuela de Sandoval, a ſuperannuated lady, a woman of peeviſh, odd temper, has no valet: ſhe generally keeps but one, and hardly that for a day together. There is a livery coat in the houſe which ſerves for all the valets that come thither, let them be of what ſize they will. It may be ſaid that they have only tried it on: for it is as good as new, though two thouſand valets have had it on. Dr Alvar Fannez wants a valet: he is a chymiſt; he keeps his ſervants well, and allows them good wages; but then he tries his medicines upon them. There are often vacancies in this man's houſe." "You have ſhewn us a fine parcel of places," ſays Fabricio, interrupting him. "Have a little patience," ſays Arias de Londonna, "we have not done yet; we ſhall come to ſome by and by that will content you." He then read in his regiſter: "Donna Alfonſa de Solis, an old bigot, who ſpends two thirds of her time at church, and will always have her valet with her; ſhe has been without one theſe three weeks. The licentiate Sedillo, an old canon of the chapter of this city, turned away his valet yeſterday." "Stop there, Signior Arias de Londonna," cried Fabricio, "we will go no farther; this place will do. Sedillo is a friend of my maſter's, and I know him perfectly well: he has an old houſekeeper, called *Dame Jacinta*, who manages every thing; and they live as well as any people in Valladolid.

dolid. There is plenty of all things: beſides, the canon is an infirm man, an old, gouty creature; he cannot live long, and his valet is ſure of a legacy when he dies. A charming proſpect for a lackey, Gil Blas," added he, turning to me: "let us loſe no time, friend; we will go to the licentiate's this minute: I will preſent thee to him myſelf, and be reſponſible for thee." For fear of loſing ſo fair an opportunity, we took our leaves abruptly of Signior Arias, who aſſured me for my money, that if I miſſed this place, he would help me to as good a one.

BOOK II.

CHAP. I.

Fabricio carries Gil Blas to the licentiate Sedillo's houſe. In what ſtate they found the canon. The portrait of his houſekeeper.

WE were ſo afraid of coming too late to the old licentiate's, that we ran all the way. The door was ſhut when we came to this houſe: we knocked; a girl of ten years of age, whom the houſekeeper made paſs for her niece, in ſpite of ſcandal, opened the door; and we demanded to ſpeak with the canon. Dame Jacinta appeared: ſhe was certainly arrived at the years of diſcretion; but ſhe was ſtill handſome, and had particularly a very freſh complexion. She had an ordinary ſtuff morning-gown on, with a leather girdle

girdle, to which hung on one ſide a bunch of keys, and on the other a ſtring of large beads. We ſaluted her very reſpectfully; ſhe did the ſame by us, looking very modeſt and courteous.

"I underſtand," ſays my comrade, "that the licentiate Signior Sedillo wants an honeſt lad to ſerve him; and I have brought him one that, I doubt not, will content him." At theſe words the houſekeeper fixed her eyes upon me; and thinking my embroidery did not very well ſuit with Fabricio's diſcourſe, demanded if it was I who wanted the vacant place? "Yes, this young man," ſaid the ſon of Nunnez: "as fine as he appears, ſome misfortunes oblige him to look out for a ſervice: he will ſoon forget them," added he, with a genteel air, "if he is ſo happy as to get into this houſe, and live with the virtuous Jacinta, who deſerves to be houſekeeper to the patriarch of the Indies." At theſe words the old jade gave over looking on me, to take a ſurvey of the civil perſon that ſpoke to her; and thinking that ſhe had ſome knowledge of him, "I have a confuſed notion of having ſeen you before," ſaid ſhe; "pray, where was it?" "Chaſte Jacinta," replied Fabricio, "I am very proud that you are pleaſed to take notice of me: I have been here twice with my maſter Signior Manuel Ordonnez, ſteward of the hoſpital." "It is ſo," ſays the houſekeeper; "I remember it, and call you to mind. And ſince you belong to Signior Ordonnez, you muſt doubtleſs be

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a ſober, honeſt young man: your place ſpeaks in praiſe of you; and this lad cannot have a better man to be reſponſible for him: come in," continued ſhe, "I will introduce you to Signior Sedillo; I believe he will be glad to have a youth of your recommendation." We followed Dame Jacinta to the canon's apartment, which was below ſtairs, and conſiſted of four little rooms. Jacinta deſired us to ſtay in the outermoſt, while ſhe went into the next, where was the licentiate. When they had talked the matter over between themſelves, ſhe came out, and ſaid, we might go in. We found the old dotard in a large eaſy chair, with a pillow under his head, and cuſhions under his arms and legs, the latter on a ſtool. We approached him without ſtanding much upon ceremony. Fabricio was ſtill the ſpokeſman; and not content with repeating what he had ſaid to the houſekeeper, he highly extolled my merit: and enlarged particularly on the honour I had acquired at Dr Godinez's in my philoſophical diſputations, as if one had need to be a great philoſopher, to qualify one to be a canon's valet. However his panegyric had ſo good an effect on the licentiate, who beſides had obſerved that Dame Jacinta was not againſt taking me, that he anſwered the ſon of Nunnez, "Friend, I take the lad thou haſt brought into my ſervice. I like him well, and have a good opinion of his manners, being recommended to me by a ſervant of Signior Ordonnez."

Fabricio perceiving that I was hired, made

a low bow to the canon, and a lower ſtill to the houſekeeper. After which he retired, well ſatisfied with what he had done, whiſpering me in the ear, "We ſhall ſee one another again; keep where you are." As ſoon as he was gone, the licentiate aſked me what my name was? why I left my country? and by ſuch queſtions engaged me to tell my whole ſtory before Dame Jacinta. I diverted them both, eſpecially by the relation of my laſt adventure. The old man almoſt killed himſelf with laughing at the civility of Camilla and Don Raphael. It threw him into ſuch a fit of coughing, that I thought he never would have come to himſelf again. He had not made his will yet; and one may by that imagine what a fright his houſekeeper was in: ſhe ran trembling to his aſſiſtance, and did every thing that is done to infants when they cough, rubbed his forehead, and clapt him on the back, which recovered him. The old man gave over coughing, and his houſekeeper ceaſed to torment him. I was going to finiſh my ſtory; but Dame Jacinta, fearing a ſecond cough, was againſt it. She then took me with her to the canon's wardrobe, where hung up a livery-ſuit, which had ſerved my predeceſſor. She gave it to me, and put mine in its place; which I was willing to keep, hoping ſtill that I might have occaſion to make uſe of it. After this we went both of us to get dinner ready.

She found that I was no ſtranger to what belonged to a kitchen; I had ſerved an apprenticeſhip to it under Dame Leonarda, who was

was a tolerable cook, but not comparable to Dame Jacinta, who perhaps outdid the archbiſhop of Toledo's. She excelled in every thing: her jellies were exquiſite; her ſauces the ſame; her fricaſſees and haſhes the beſt-ſeaſoned in the world. When dinner was ready, we returned to the canon's room; where while I laid the cloth near his eaſy chair, the houſekeeper tucked a napkin under his chin, and tied it about his ſhoulders.

This done, I brought him ſome ſoup, which might have been ſerved up to the famous director of Madrid; and two ragouts that might have ſatisfied the ſenſuality of a viceroy, had not Dame Jacinta been ſparing of her ſpices, for fear of enraging the licentiate's gout. At the ſight of theſe two diſhes, my old maſter, who ſeemed before debilitated in all his members, ſhewed me that he had not entirely loſt the uſe of his arms. He helped himſelf to put away his pillow and cuſhions, and prepared to fall to very briſkly. Though his hand ſhook, he did not refuſe its ſervice: it came and went freely, but ſo that he ſpilt half of what he would have carried to his mouth, on the table-cloth, and his napkin. When he had done with the ſoup and ragouts, I ſerved him up a partridge and two quails roaſted. Dame Jacinta was very officious to ſupply him with wine, a little tempered, in a large, deep ſilver cup, which ſhe held to his mouth as if he had been a child of fifteen months old.

He devoured the ragouts, and made the

ſame diſpatch with the trotters. When he had ſtuffed himſelf up to the chin, his handmaid took off his napkin, put his pillows and his cuſhions in their places again; and left him in his eaſy chair to take that repoſe which generally attends a full ſtomach: we cleared his table, and went ourſelves to dinner at another.

Thus did the canon regale himſelf every day, being perhaps the greateſt eater of the whole chapter. Indeed, ſomewhat leſs ſatisfied him for a ſupper than for dinner. A pullet and a deſſert would do at night. I fared very well in this houſe, I lived at my eaſe. There was but one thing that I could complain of, which was, my being obliged to watch a-nights with my maſter, as if I had had a ſick body to tend. Beſides a retention of urine, which made him call for his chamberpot ten times an hour, he was very apt to ſweat; and when he did ſo, I muſt change his ſhirt for him. "Gil Blas," ſaid he to me the ſecond night, "thou art a dexterous, active youth: I foreſee I ſhall like thee well: I only recommend to thee to carry it towards Dame Jacinta with complaiſance. She has ſerved me very zealouſly theſe fifteen years. She has always taken particular care of my perſon. I cannot be too grateful to her. I muſt own to thee freely, I love her better than all my family. I turned a relation of mine, my own ſiſter's ſon, out of doors on her account. He paid no manner of reſpect to her; and inſtead of doing juſtice to her ſincere attachment for me, the raſcal treated her as an hypocrite.

Virtue

Virtue now a-days is nothing but hypocriſy with ſuch young fellows: thank heaven I got rid of him. He who has a kindneſs for me is my beſt relation, and I will own kindred to no body but thoſe that do me good offices." "You are in the right, Sir," ſaid I to the licentiate; "gratitude ought to have more force upon us than the laws of nature." "Moſt certainly," replied he; "and my will makes it appear how little I value my relations. My governante comes in for a good ſhare; and I ſhall not forget thee, if thou goeſt on as thou doſt begin. The valet I diſmiſſed yeſterday loſt a good legacy by it. If the wretch had not forced me by his ill carriage to turn him off, I ſhould have enriched him; but he was a proud rogue, and did not pay due reſpect to Dame Jacinta; and ſo lazy, he cared not to be at the leaſt trouble. He did not love to wake with me; and it was a moſt tireſome thing in him to paſs the nights in attendance upon me." "A raſcal," cried I, as if inſpired by the genius of Fabricio, "he deſerved not to wait upon ſo honeſt a gentleman as you are. A lad that has the good fortune to belong to you, ought to be indefatigable in his endeavours to pleaſe you. He ſhould delight in his duty; and though he ſweat blood and water for you, not think he did too much."

I perceived theſe words were very acceptable to the canon; nor was he leſs delighted to hear me aſſure him how reſpectfully I would behave myſelf towards Dame Jacinta.

Reſolving therefore to paſs for a valet, I ſtrove to be eaſy, and then I went through my ſervice with the beſt grace in the world. I made no complaint of being kept up a-nights; but I muſt confeſs I did not very well like it; and had not the legacy ran in my mind, I ſhould ſoon have been weary of my place. It is true, I ſlept ſome hours in the day-time. I muſt do the governante the juſtice to own ſhe was very civil to me, which I attributed to the pains I took to get into her good graces by my obliging and reſpectful carriage. If I was at table with her and her niece Ineſille, I changed their plates for them, filled out their wine, and was very officious to ſerve them in all things. By theſe methods I made them my friends. One day when Dame Jacinta was gone to market, I began to diſcourſe Ineſille about her parentage; I aſked her if her father and mother were living? "No," replied ſhe, "they have been dead a long time; ſo my good aunt tells me, for I never ſaw them." I took what the girl ſaid for truth, though her diſcourſe did not ſeem to be ſo plain as it ſhould be, and drew the girl in to talk ſo freely at laſt, that ſhe told me more than I would have had her: ſhe informed me, or rather I apprehended by what ſhe ſaid, (ſeveral words eſcaping her which ſhe did not intend), that this good aunt of hers had a good friend who lived alſo with an old canon, whoſe temporalities he had the care of; and that theſe two happy domeſtics were in hopes to join together the ſpoils of their maſters by a marriage, the

pleaſures

pleaſures of which they enjoyed beforehand. I have obſerved already, that Dame Jacinta, though a little ſuperannuated, had ſtill a pretty good complexion: it is true, ſhe ſpared for no pains to deſerve it: ſhe took a clyſter every morning; and all the day long, and at night too, till ſhe fell aſleep, ſhe ſwallowed excellent pills, prepared for that purpoſe: ſhe alſo had her full ſleep, while I was waking with my maſter: but what contributed perhaps more than any thing to preſerve her complexion ſo freſh, were two iſſues, which Ineſille ſaid ſhe had, one in each leg.

CHAP. II.

How the canon was treated when he fell ſick: what happened upon it. The legacy he left Gil Blas by his laſt will.

I Served the licentiate Sedillo three months without complaining of the bad nights he made me paſs with him. At the end of that time he fell ſick. He was taken with a fever; and the pain it gave him inflamed his gout. Then it was that he ſent for a doctor, the firſt time he had made uſe of one all his life, though it had been pretty long. He ordered Dr Sangrado to be called, a phyſician whom all Valladolid took to be another Hippocrates. Dame Jacinta wiſhed that the canon would have, in the firſt place, ſettled his laſt will and codicil. She hinted it to him; but he did not think himſelf ſo near his end, and was beſides very obſtinate in certain matters. I went for Dr Sangrado, and brought him

him to our houſe. He was a meagre, pale man, and had been a practitioner forty years. He affected a grave look. He weighed his words, and would be thought to talk eloquently. His arguments ſeemed to be geometrical, and his opinions extremely ſingular.

Having looked upon my maſter, he ſaid, with a doctoral air, "We muſt ſupply the want of perſpiration which is ſtopt; others in my place would, without doubt, make uſe of ſalts and volatile medicaments, which are, for the moſt part, made up of ſulphur and mercury; but purgatives and ſudorifics are pernicious drugs. All chymical preparations are prejudicial. I uſe nothing but what is ſimple and ſafe. What diet have you uſed yourſelf to?" continued he to the canon. "I eat generally ſoups and jellies," replied he. "Soups and jellies!" cried the doctor: "I do not wonder you are ill; all ſuch delicious meats are poiſoned pleaſures; ſnares laid for men by voluptuouſneſs, to deſtroy them more ſurely. You muſt renounce ſuch high food. The plaineſt is the moſt healthy. As the blood is inſipid, ſo it requires meats that come neareſt to nature, Do you drink wine?" added he. "Yes," ſaid the licentiate, "wine mingled with water." "As much water as you think proper," replied the phyſician. "How irregular you are! what a frightful regimen is this! I wonder you have lived ſo long as you have. How old are you?" "Sixty-nine," ſays the canon. "Juſt as I thought," replied the doctor: "old age is anticipated by

by intemperance. If you had lived on a plain diet, as roaſted apples, and drank water only, you would not now have had the gout. All your members would eaſily have performed their functions. However, I do not deſpair ſetting you upon your feet again, provided you do as I ſhall direct." The licentiate promiſed to obey him in all things. Then Sangrado ſent me for a ſurgeon of his acquaintance, and took away ſix good diſhes of blood from my maſter, to begin to ſupply the want of perſpiration. "Maſter Onez," ſays he to the ſurgeon, "come three hours hence, and take away as much more: do the ſame to-morrow. It is an errour to think blood is neceſſary for the preſervation of life. One cannot bleed a ſick man too much. He is not obliged to any motion or conſiderable exerciſe. He has nothing to do but to ſave himſelf from dying; and wants no more blood to ſupport life than a man that is aſleep does: life in both conſiſts only in the pulſe and perſpiration." Thus did the doctor order frequent and plentiful bleedings; and that the canon ſhould have hot water given him every moment, aſſuring him that water drank in abundance was a certain ſpecific againſt all ſorts of diſeaſes. When he went out, he looked on Dame Jacinta and me with an air of content, and ſaid, he would anſwer for the ſick man's doing well, if he be managed in the manner he preſcribed. The governante, who perhaps had another opinion of his method, proteſted that his preſcriptions

ſhould

ſhould be exactly followed. Accordingly we immediately ſet water a heating: and the doctor having recommended to us, above all things, not to be ſparing of it to him, we made my maſter take two or three pints at a draught. An hour after we repeated the doſe; and ſo every hour, till we had poured into his ſtomach a deluge of water. The ſurgeon ſeconded us by the quantity of blood he drew from him; and all of us in two days time reduced the old canon to extremity. The good man not being able to ſwallow any more of the ſpecific, ſaid to me with a faint voice, "Hold, Gil Blas; do not give me any more, friend. I ſee I ſhall die, notwithſtanding the virtue of the water; and though they have hardly left me a drop of blood, I am not a bit the better for it, which is a proof that the moſt ſkilful phyſician cannot prolong a man's life, when his hour is come. Go fetch me a notary; I will add a codicil to my will." Though I was far from being afflicted to hear him talk of his will, yet I affected to ſeem very ſorry; and concealing the pleaſure I took in executing the commiſſion he gave me, "Ah Sir," cried I, "it is not ſo bad with you yet: with heaven's help you may recover." "No, no, child," replied he, "I find the gout returns upon me, approaches nearer to my vitals, and my time is come; be quick, haſte, and do as I bid you." Indeed I could perceive that he altered, and was drawing near his end; ſo I made haſte to obey his commands with reſpect to the notary, leaving

leaving with him Dame Jacinta, who was more afraid than I that he ſhould die without adding his codicil to his teſtament. I went to the firſt notary I could get; and finding him at home, "Sir," ſaid I, "my maſter the licentiate Sedillo is a-dying. He wants a codicil to be added to his will; pray diſpatch; we muſt not loſe a moment." The notary was a little old man who loved raillery. He aſked me, "who was the canon's phyſician?" I anſwered, "Dr Sangrado." At the name of him he took his cloak and hat, and cried, "Let us be gone, for that doctor is very expeditious; he hardly gives his patients time to ſend for notaries. That man has hindered me of many a good teſtament." Saying this, he made what haſte he could; and we went together to my maſter, not letting the graſs grow under us, to prevent his going out of the world before he had ſettled his affairs. As we were on the way, I ſaid to the notary, "You know, Sir, that a dying man often loſes his memory: if by chance my maſter ſhould forget me, I beg you to put him in mind of my induſtry." "That I will, child," replied the little notary; "depend upon it I will exhort him to give thee ſomething conſiderable, if he is ever ſo little diſpoſed to reward thee for thy ſervices." When we came to my maſter, he had his ſenſes ſtill about him. Dame Jacinta was with him; and her tears, which ſhe had at will, flowed from her in abundance: ſhe had played her part, and prepared the good man

to

to do very handſomely for her. We left the notary with our maſter, and ſhe and I ſtaid without in the antechamber, where the ſurgeon came to us, to give the canon a new and his laſt bleeding. But we would not let him enter the room. "Stay, Mr Martin," ſays the governante to him, "you ſhall not go into Signior Sedillo's chamber now he is buſy. There's the notary with him; and you ſhall not bleed him any more till his teſtament is finiſhed." My dame and I were afraid the licentiate ſhould die before it was done: but by good luck the act for which we were in ſo much pain was executed. The notary coming out of the chamber, clapt me on the ſhoulder, and ſaid, ſmiling, "Thou art not forgotten, Gil Blas." I was overjoyed to hear it, and ſo well pleaſed with my maſter for remembering me, that I promiſed to pray for him after he was dead, which ſoon happened; for the ſurgeon having blooded him once more, the poor old man, who was before but too weak, expired almoſt during the operation. As he was at his laſt gaſp, the doctor came in, and ſeemed a little ſtartled, as quick as he uſed to be in diſpatching his patients. However, inſtead of imputing the death of the canon to his bleedings, and repeated draughts of hot water, he only ſaid as he went away. There was not blood enough taken from him: neither has he drank hot water enough. The doctor's executioner, I mean the ſurgeon, ſeeing there was no more buſineſs for him, followed Signior Sangrado.

No

No ſooner was our maſter dead, but Dame Jacinta, Ineſille, and I ſet up a-howling, which was heard by all the neighbourhood. Jacinta, who had the greateſt reaſon to rejoice, ſo bewailed his death, that one would have thought ſhe was the moſt afflicted woman in the world. The room in an inſtant was full of people, who came out of curioſity more than compaſſion. The relations of the defunct hearing he was dead, ran to our houſe, and ſealed up every thing. They ſaw the governante in ſuch affliction, that they imagined at firſt, the canon had not made his will: but they ſoon underſtood, that it was done in all the forms, and had a codicil annexed to it. Upon opening it, they found the teſtator had bequeathed his beſt effects to Dame Jacinta and her daughter: and the relations of the deceaſed made a funeral oration on him, in terms which were by no means honourable to his memory. They alſo fell upon the governante, and beſtowed ſome eulogies upon me too. It muſt be owned that in appearance I deſerved them: the licentiate, reſt the ſoul of him, to engage me to remember him as long as I lived, ordered this article to be inſerted in the codicil: "Item, ſince "Gil Blas is a lad who already has ſome li- "terature, I leave him my library, all my "books and manuſcripts, without exception." I could not imagine where this pretended library was. I had not ſeen any ſuch thing in the houſe. I knew there were a few papers, and five or ſix books on a ſhelf in my maſter's

cloſet; and that was all my legacy. The books were beſides of no uſe to me. One was entitled, *The complete cook*; another a treatiſe of *indigeſtion, and the method of curing it.* The others were the four parts of the *Breviary*, half eaten away by the moth. As for the manuſcripts, the moſt curious were ſome briefs and bills relating to a law-ſuit the canon had formerly had about his benefice. When I had examined my legacy with more attention than it deſerved, I left it for his relations, who had envied it me ſo much. I reſtored alſo to them the coat I had of the licentiate, and took my own again, receiving my wages only for the fruit of my ſervices. I left them as ſoon as I was paid off, and looked out for another place. Dame Jacinta, beſides the money which was bequeathed her, by the help of her good friend, found means, while the licentiate was ill, to plunder him of his moſt valuable effects.

CHAP. III.

Gil Blas hires himſelf to Doctor Sangrado; and becomes a famous phyſician.

I Reſolved to go to Signior Arias de Londonna, and ſearch his regiſter for another ſervice; but as I was ready to enter the Turn-Again-Alley, where he lodged, I met Dr Sangrado, whom I had not ſeen ſince my maſter's death. I took the liberty to ſalute him, and he knew me again preſently, notwithſtanding

withſtanding I had changed my habit; and told me he was glad to ſee me. "Child," ſays he, "I was thinking of thee this minute; I want an honeſt lad to ſerve me; and I believe thou wouldſt do my buſineſs, if thou canſt read and write. "If that is all, Sir," replied I, "I am for your purpoſe." "Sayeſt thou ſo?" cried he: "thou art my man then. Come along with me: thou ſhalt live pleaſantly, and I will treat thee with diſtinction: I will give thee no wages; but thou ſhalt want for nothing. I will keep thee handſomely, and teach thee the great art of curing diſeaſes. In a word, thou ſhalt rather be my pupil than my valet."

I accepted of the doctor's propoſal, hoping that under ſo learned a maſter I ſhould become an eminent phyſician. He took me home with him immediately, to inſtal me in the employment which he propoſed to me, which was, to write down the names and dwellings of the patients that ſent for him when he was abroad. He kept a regiſter for that purpoſe, wherein an old maid-ſervant whom he had for all his houſehold affairs, marked their addreſs; but, beſides her ignorance of orthography, ſhe wrote ſo ill, that the doctor often could not decipher it. He gave this book in charge to me; and it might be well called the *Regiſter of the dead*; for hardly a man whoſe name was entered there, lived after it.

I wrote down, as I may ſay, the names of the perſons who were bound for the other world, as the clerk of a ſtage-coach office

writes down the names of thoſe who take places. My pen was often in my hand; for there was not at that time a phyſician in Valladolid of more repute than Dr Sangrado. He impoſed on the public by a ſpecious way of talking, and ſome lucky cures, which had done him more honour than he deſerved. He did not want practice, nor conſequently money. He did not ſpend it too profuſely. We lived very frugally: our food was generally peaſe, beans, roaſted apples, or cheeſe. He ſaid thoſe aliments agreed beſt with the ſtomach, being the moſt proper for trituration, that is to ſay, more eaſily bruiſed. However, as light as they were of digeſtion, he would not allow us to ſurfeit ourſelves, in which truly he ſhewed himſelf very moderate. But though he forbade the maid and me to eat much, to make amends, he permitted us to drink as much water as we would. Inſtead of ſetting us bounds in that, he ſometimes cried, "Drink, children; health conſiſts in the ſupplenes and humectation of parts. Drink water abundantly, it is an univerſal diſſolvent. Water melts all the ſalts. Is the courſe of the blood ſlow? it quickens it. Is it too rapid? it checks its impetuoſity. Our doctor was ſo honeſt in that himſelf, that he drank nothing but water, though he was pretty well in years. He defined old age to be a natural phthiſis, which dried up and conſumed us; and, purſuant to this definition, he deplored the ignorance of thoſe who called wine the old man's milk. He maintained that

wine

wine wore them out and deſtroyed them; and ſaid very eloquently, that that liquor is to them, as well as to all the world, a friend that betrays, and a pleaſure that deceives.

Notwithſtanding all his fine arguments, I had not been eight days in his houſe, before I was taken ill of a flux, and a violent pain in my ſtomach, which I was ſo bold as to attribute to the univerſal diſſolvent, and the ill diet I lived upon. I complained to my maſter, hoping he would relax, and allow me a little wine at meals; but he was too great an enemy to that liquor to conſent to it. "If thou feeleſt a diſtaſte at pure water," ſays he, "there are innocent helps to ſupport the ſtomach againſt the inſipidity of aqueous draughts: ſage, for example, or balm, give it an agreeable taſte; and if you would make it ſtill more delicious, you need only mix the flour of *oeillet*, roſemary, or wild poppy." Whatever he could ſay in praiſe of water, and whatever recipe's he would have given me to improve my beverages, I drank it with ſo much moderation, that he obſerving, ſaid, "I don't wonder, Gil Blas, you do not enjoy your health well; you don't drink enough, friend. Water taken in ſmall quantities ſerves only to lay open the bilious parts, and give them more activity; inſtead of which, we ought to drown them by tempering them copiouſly. Lay aſide this panic fear, which perhaps thou haſt for frequent drinking. I will warrant the iſſue, and if thou doſt not find it good for thee, tell

me. Celſus will be my ſurety: that oracle of the Latins has written an admirable panegyric upon water: he tells us in expreſs words, that thoſe who excuſe their drinking wine, on account of a weak ſtomach, do a manifeſt injuſtice to the ſtomachic powers, and make it only a cover for their ſenſuality.

That I might not appear indocile when I was entering into the career of phyſic, I ſeemed to be convinced that he was in the right. I even confeſſed that I was of his opinion; and, on his and Celſus's guaranty, continued to take large draughts of water to drown my choler: and though I found myſelf worſe and worſe every day, yet prejudice was too hard for experience. I had, as may be ſeen, a happy diſpoſition to become a phyſician; but I could not always reſiſt the violence of my ails, which grew upon me to ſuch a point that I reſolved to quit Dr Sangrado's ſervice; but he beſtowed a new employment on me, which made me change my mind. "Child," ſays he to me one day, "hearken to me: I am not one of thoſe hard, ungrateful maſters, who let their domeſtics grow old in their ſervice before they reward them. I am ſatisfied with thy conduct. I love thee, and, without expecting thou wilt ſerve me any longer, I will make thy fortune. I will diſcover to thee the whole myſtery of the ſalutary art, which I have ſo many years profeſſed. Other doctors make it conſiſt in a thouſand difficult ſciences; but I will ſhorten the way, and ſpare thee the pains of ſtudying phyſic, pharmacy,

macy, botany, and anatomy. Know, friend, all that is neceſſary, is bleeding and making them drink hot water: this is the ſecret for curing all the diſtempers in the world: yes, this wonderful ſecret which I reveal to thee, and which nature, impenetrable to my brethren, has not been able to keep from my obſervations, is all included in theſe two points, frequent bleeding, and drinking of water: I have nothing more to teach thee: thou knoweſt the very bottom of phyſic, and reaping the fruit of my long experience, thou wilt at once become as ſkilful as I am. Thou mayſt alſo be aſſiſtant to me; thou ſhalt keep the regiſter in the morning, and in the afternoon ſhalt viſit ſome of my patients: while I take care of the nobility and clergy, thou ſhalt attend the third order for me; and when thou haſt done ſo ſome time, I will get thee admitted into the faculty. Thou art a learned man, Gil Blas, before you be a phyſician; whereas others are a long time, and moſt of them all their lives phyſicians, before they are learned."

I thanked the doctor for having ſo ſpeedily rendered me capable of becoming his ſubſtitute; and to teſtify how ſenſible I was of his goodneſs to me, I aſſured him I would follow his opinions as long as I lived, even though they were contrary to Hippocrates. This aſſurance of mine was nevertheleſs a little inſincere: I did not approve of his ſentiments about the water, and reſolved to drink wine as often as I viſited my patients. I hung my

coat

coat upon a peg the ſecond time, put on one of my maſter's, and aſſumed the air of a phyſician, whoſe profeſſion I entered upon at the expenſe of all thoſe that ſent for me. I began with an Alguazil who was taken ill of a pleuriſy. I ordered him to be blooded without mercy, and that he ſhould have an immoderate portion of water. I, in the next place, was ſent for by a paſtry-cook, who was roaring out with the gout; I was no more ſparing of his blood than I had been of the Alguazil's, and preſcribed him a deluge of water alſo. I received twelve reals for my preſcriptions; which gave me ſuch a liking to my profeſſion, that I reſolved to ſpend the reſt of my days in taking people's blood from them, and filling them up with water. As I was coming out of the paſtry-cook's houſe, I met with Fabricio, whom I had not ſeen ſince Sedillo the licentiate's death. He gazed upon me ſome moments in a ſurpriſe, and then burſt out into a fit of laughter, till he was ready to ſplit his ſides. Truly he had good reaſon to laugh: for I had a clock that trailed on the ground; my coat and breeches were four times as long and as wide as they needed to have been, I might very well paſs for an original. I let him have his laugh out, and could hardly forbear keeping him company; but I put a conſtraint on myſelf for decorum's ſake, it being in the ſtreet, and the better to counterfeit the phyſician, who is no riſible animal. Fabricio, who laughed ſo heartily at my ridiculous air, laughed ſtill more at my ſerious

ſerious one; and when his fit was a little over, "For heaven's ſake, Gil Blas," ſays he, "who has equipped thee ſo pleaſantly? What devil has diſguiſed thee ſo?" "Not ſo faſt, friend," ſaid I: "ſhew reſpect to a new Hippocrates. Know that I am ſubſtitute to Dr Sangrado, the moſt famous phyſician in Valladolid. I have lived with him theſe three weeks. He has ſhewn me the bottom of medicine; and not being able to attend all the ſick that ſent for him, I am employed to aſſiſt him. He looks after the great folks, and I after the little ones." "Very well," replies Fabricio, "that is to ſay, he abandons to thee the blood of the common people, and reſerves that of the quality to himſelf. I congratulate thee upon thy diviſion. It is better to have to do with the populace than with the nobility. If a phyſician lives in the ſuburbs, his faults are leſs in view; and his murders make no noiſe. Yes, child," added he, "thy condition is to be envied; and to talk like Alexander, if I were not Fabricio, I would be Gil Blas."

To let the ſon of the barber Nunnez ſee that he was not in the wrong when he extolled the happineſs of my circumſtances, I ſhewed him the reals given me by the Alguazil, and the paſtry-cook. Then we entered a tavern to ſpend part of them. The drawer brought us ſome pretty good wine, which I thought to be much better than it was, having taſted none a long time. I drank large draughts; and with all due reſpect to the Latin

tin oracle, I found that the ſtomachic powers were mightily refreſhed by them. We did not ſoon part; but made ourſelves merry at the expenſe of our maſters, according to the uſual way of valets. Night coming on, we parted, after having promiſed to meet again the next day in the afternoon at the ſame place.

CHAP. IV.

Gil Blas continues the practice of a phyſician with as much ſucceſs as capacity. The adventure of the ring recovered.

I Got home juſt about the time that Sangrado did. I told him what patients I had viſited; and gave him eight reals, which were all I had left of the twelve that were given me for my preſcriptions. "Eight reals!" cried he, when he had told them: "it is a ſmall matter for two viſits; but we muſt take what we can get." He kept ſix, and gave me the other two: "Here, Gil Blas," continued he, "to begin a ſtock; for thou ſhalt have a quarter-part of what thou takeſt. You will ſoon be rich, my friend; for, God willing, we ſhall have a ſickly time of it this year."

I was contented with my proportion; for reſolving to keep back every day a quarter-part of what I received in the city; and having another quarter of the remainder from him, that was a half of the whole, according to my arithmetic. This inſpired me with a new

new ardour for phyſic. Next day, as ſoon as I had dined, I put on my ſubſtitute habit, and went about my buſineſs. I viſited ſeveral patients of our regiſter, and treated them all after the ſame manner, though they had different diſtempers. Hitherto matters had paſſed without making any noiſe; and nobody as yet, thank heaven, had any thing to ſay againſt my preſcriptions: but let a phyſician be ever ſo excellent, there will be thoſe that cenſure him. I came at laſt to a grocer's, whoſe ſon had a dropſy. I found there a little blade of a doctor called *Cuchillo*, who was brought thither by a relation of the grocer's. I made very low bows to all that were preſent, eſpecially to the perſon whom I took to be ſent for to conſult with me on the patient's diſeaſe. He ſaluted me with a grave air; and looking ſome time in my face with much attention, "Signior Doctor," ſays he, "I pray you to excuſe my curioſity. I thought I had known all the phyſicians my brethren in Valladolid, but I muſt own to you that I have no manner of knowledge of you. You cannot have been long ſettled in this city." I replied, I was a young practitioner, and as yet did only preſcribe under the auſpices of Dr Sangrado. "I congratulate you," ſays he very civilly, "upon your embracing the method of ſo great a man. I make no queſtion you have already profited very much by his leſſons, though you appear to be very young." He ſaid this ſo naturally, that I could not tell whether he ſpoke ſeriouſly

ly or bantered me. I was ſtudying what to anſwer him, when the grocer interrupted our converſation, ſaying, "I am ſatisfied, Gentlemen, that both of you are perfect maſters of the art of medicine. Pray look upon my ſon, and preſcribe what you think proper for his cure. Upon this my brother doctor made his obſervations on the ſick man; and having marked the ſymptoms which diſcovered the nature of the diſtemper, he demanded of me after what manner I thought we ſhould manage him? "I am of opinion," replied I, "that he ſhould be blooded every day, and take hot water abundantly." At this the other phyſician, ſmiling on me with a malicious air, ſaid, "And are you of opinion that thoſe remedies will ſave his life?" "No doubt of it," replied I, with great confidence, "they will have that effect, being ſpecifics againſt all ſorts of diſeaſes; aſk Dr Sangrado." "Then Celſus was very much out," anſwered he, "when to cure a dropſy he injoined the patient to abſtain from eating or drinking." "Celſus," cried I, "is not my oracle. He is miſtaken as well as others; and ſometimes I affect to go quite contrary to his ſentiments." "I perceive by your diſcourſe," ſays Cuchillo, "that Dr Sangrado would inſinuate a ſure and ſatisfactory method to young practitioners. Bleeding and water-drinking are his univerſal medicine. I am not at all ſurpriſed that ſo many honeſt gentlemen have periſhed under his hands." "No invectives," replied I haſtily; "it does not become

become a man of your profeſſion to talk ſo. I muſt tell you, Monſieur Doctor, that, for want of bleeding and drinking hot water, many ſick men have been ſent into the other world. If you have any thing to object againſt Signior Sangrado, put it into writing; he will anſwer you, and we ſhall ſee on whoſe ſide the laughers will be." "By St James and St Dennis," cried Cuchillo, in a great paſſion, "you do not know me, Sir; I can bite and ſcratch as well as another. I am not afraid of Dr Sangrado, who with all his preſumption and vanity is a mere ninny." The figure of the little doctor made me deſpiſe his rage. I anſwered him tartly, and he replied in the ſame manner, and we came immediately to fiſty-cuffs. We had time to give one another ſome blows, and pluck out a handful of hair on each ſide, before the grocer and his kinſman could part us. When they had done, the maſter of the houſe paid me for my viſit, and diſmiſſed me, keeping my antagoniſt, who ſeemed to him to have the more ſkill of the two.

I had like to have met with another ſuch ill adventure at a fat quiriſter's houſe who had a fever. I no ſooner began to make mention of hot water, than he fell a-railing at my ſpecific, and curſing me for my preſcription. He called me a thouſand names, and threatened to have me thrown out at the window. I went out of his houſe much faſter than I came in. I had no inclination to viſit any more patients that day, and made what haſte

I could to meet Fabricio at the place we had appointed for our meeting. I found him there. We were both in a drinking humour, and got very merry; in which condition we returned home to our maſters. Signior Sangrado did not perceive I was ſuddled, becauſe I told him the ſtory of my quarrel with the doctor, with ſo much action, that he took my vivacity for an effect of the emotion our combat had put me into. Beſides, he found himſelf concerned in the report I made; and was himſelf piqued againſt Cuchillo. "You did well, Gil Blas," ſaid he, "to defend the honour of our remedies againſt a dwarf of the faculty. Does he pretend that aquatic beverages are not to be given in caſes of dropſy? A blockhead! I will maintain the uſe of them is very proper. Yes," continued he, "water will cure all ſorts of dropſies, as it is good for rheumatiſms and jaundice. It is alſo excellent in thoſe fevers, when the ſick burn and freeze at the ſame time. It is marvellous even in thoſe diſeaſes that ariſe from cold ſerous phlegmatic humours. This opinion may ſeem ſtrange to young phyſicians, ſuch as Cuchillo; but it is very ſupportable in good medicine: and if thoſe men were capable of arguing like philoſophers, inſtead of railing at me, they would become my moſt zealous defenders."

He did not ſuſpect my being diſordered with wine, he was in ſuch a paſſion: and to exaſperate him the more, I had added ſome circumſtances of my own head to my ſtory.

However,

However, as full as he was of the matter, he perceived that I drank more water that evening than uſual. The wine heated me; I was very dry, and took large draughts of water: but he thought I began to take a liking to his aquatics. "I find, Gil Blas," ſays he, ſmiling, "thou haſt not now ſuch an averſion to water; heaven be praiſed! you drink it like nectar: I do not wonder at it, my friend, I knew thou wouldſt bring thyſelf to love it." "Sir," replied I, "every thing has its time. I would at this inſtant give a gallon of wine for a pint of water." This anſwer charmed the doctor, who would not loſe ſo fair an occaſion to enlarge upon the excellence of water; he undertook to make a new eulogy on it; not like a cold orator, but like an enthuſiaſt. "A thouſand and a thouſand times," cries he, "more eſtimable and more innocent were the houſes of meeting of old, than our modern taverns. The ancients did not meet to conſume their eſtates and deſtroy their healths in gorging themſelves with wine, but to have harmleſs converſation, and refreſh themſelves with hot water. We cannot ſufficiently admire the foreſight of the earlieſt maſters of civil life, who erected public-houſes, where hot water was given to all comers. Wine was then locked up in the apothecaries ſhops, that none might uſe it without the preſcription of the phyſician. Oh what wiſdom was that! it is without doubt," added he, "by a happy remain of that ancient frugality, worthy of the

golden age, that ſome are yet found who like thee and me drink nothing but water, and who believe they preſerve themſelves from, or cure all diſeaſes, by drinking warm water, which has not been boiled; for I have obſerved that water, when it has been boiled, is heavier and more offenſive to the ſtomach."

I could hardly forbear laughing, to hear him talk thus; however I kept my countenance as well as I could. Nay, I agreed with him as to the virtues of hot water. I condemned the uſe of wine, and pitied thoſe men who unhappily took pleaſure in ſo pernicious a beverage. The wine continuing to heat me ſtill, I filled a huge cup with water; and after having taken a good draught, "Come, Sir," ſaid I to my maſter, "let us drink this beneficial liquor. Let us revive in your houſe the wiſdom and frugality of the ancients." He applauded me for ſaying ſo, and held out an hour longer in the praiſe of water, exhorting me never to drink any thing elſe. I promiſed him to take a large quantity every night, to uſe myſelf to it; and that I might keep my promiſe the more eaſily, I went to bed with a reſolution to go every day to the tavern. The quarrel which I had at the grocer's, did not hinder my preſcribing next day freſh bleedings and freſh doſes of hot water. As I was coming out of a houſe, where I had been to viſit a poet who had a frenzy, I met an old woman in the ſtreet, who aſked me if I was a phyſician? I told her, Yes. "I then moſt humbly entreat you," replied ſhe, "to go along

long with me. My niece was taken ill yeſterday, and I cannot find out her diſtemper." I followed the old woman, who conducted me to a houſe, where I entered a room pretty well furniſhed, and ſaw a woman abed. I drew near to obſerve her; immediately her features ſtruck me; and after having a while examined her face a little better, I knew her again to be Camilla, who had acted her part ſo well with me before. As for her, ſhe did not know me, either through the diſorder her diſtemper put her into, or through the alteration of my dreſs, being now in the garb of a doctor. I took her by the hand, to feel her pulſe, and perceived my ring was upon her finger. I was overjoyed to light upon a treaſure I had ſo much right to ſeize, and I had a great mind to do it at the inſtant; but conſidering that thoſe women might cry out, and Don Raphael, or ſome other defender of the fair ſex, run to their help, I took care not to give way to the temptation. I thought it was better to diſſemble, and conſult Fabricio thereupon; I fixed upon this laſt reſolution. In the mean time the old woman was very earneſt with me to tell her what diſtemper her niece had. I was not ſuch a fool as to own I could not tell. On the contrary, I pretended to be maſter of it; and ſaid gravely, in imitation of Signior Sangrado, that her illneſs was occaſioned for want of perſpiration: that ſhe muſt be let blood immediately, bleeding being the natural ſubſtitute of tranſpiration. I

alſo ordered her hot water, that all things might be done according to our rules.

I ſhortened my viſit as much as I could, and haſted away to the ſon of Nunnez, whom I met juſt as he was coming out of his maſter's houſe, who had ſent him on an errand. I informed him of my new adventure, and aſked his advice, whether I had beſt have Camilla apprehended by the magiſtrates? "No," replied he, "by no means; that is not the way to have your ring again. Thoſe ſort of men don't love to make reſtitutions. Remember thy being impriſoned at Aſtorga, what became of thy horſe, thy money, and thy cloaths. Did not they keep all? The beſt way will be to make uſe of our own induſtry to recover thy diamond. I will contrive how to do it. I will think upon it as I go to the hoſpital, where I have two or three words to tell the purveyor from my maſter. Meet me at our tavern, and do not be impatient; I will be with thee in a very little time."

Nevertheleſs, it was three hours before he came to me: I did not know who he was at firſt: beſides that, he had changed his habit, and tied his hair up; a falſe muſtachio covered half his face. He had a ſword on, the hilt of which was at leaſt three foot in circumference. He marched at the head of five men, who, like him, had their buſhy muſtachios, and their long rapiers, looking all like perſons of reſolution. "Your ſervant, Signior Gil Blas," ſays he, accoſting me: "behold an Alguazil of a new make, and

and ſerjeants of the ſame turn attending him; carry us to that woman that has robbed you of the diamond, and take my word for it, we will make her reſtore it." I embraced Fabricio at theſe words, who told me the ſtratagem he deſigned to uſe for me; and gave him to underſtand that I highly approved of the expedient he had contrived. I alſo ſaluted the counterfeit ſerjeants, who were three footmen, and two journeymen-barbers of his acquaintance, whom he had engaged in this buſineſs. I made the brigade drink, and we went ſtraight to Camilla's, where we arrived juſt as it was duſk. We knocked at the door, which was ſhut. The old woman opened it, and taking the perſons that were with me for officers who did not come thither without reaſon, ſhe was terribly affrighted. "Don't be afraid, mother," ſaid Fabricio; "we come hither, only about a ſmall affair, which will be ſoon over." At theſe words we went forward, and entered the ſick perſon's chamber, conducted by the old woman, who lighted us along with a candle in a ſilver candleſtick. I took the candle, went to the bedſide, and looked in Camilla's face very fully, that ſhe might know me. "Behold," cried I, "thou cheat, the credulous Gil Blas, whom thou haſt ſo wronged: have I met with thee at laſt? The corregidor has my petition againſt thee, and this Alguazil is ordered to apprehend thee." "Mr Officer," added I, "do your duty." "I need not be put in mind of that," replied he, heightening his voice;

voice; "I ſhall take hold of that creature; I have had a note of her name a long while in my regiſter." Come, get you up, Madam," continued he; "dreſs immediately, I will be your gentleman-uſher, and lead you to one of the beſt jails in Valladolid." At theſe words, Camilla, as ill as ſhe was, perceiving the two ſerjeants with huge muſtachios were about to take her out of bed by force, raiſed herſelf up, joining her hands in a ſuppliant manner, and with a look which ſhewed the fright ſhe was in, cried out to me, "Signior Gil Blas, have pity on me, I conjure you, by the chaſte mother to whom you owe your birth: though I am very guilty, I am yet more miſerable: I will give you your diamond, therefore don't ruin me." Saying this, ſhe pulled the ring off her finger, and gave it to me. But I anſwered, "that my diamond alone would not ſatisfy me; I muſt have my thouſand ducats alſo which I had been robbed of in my furniſhed lodging." "As for the ducats, Signior, do not demand them of me," replied Camilla; "the traitor Raphael, whom I have not ſeen from that time to this, ran away with them that very night." "Poor ſoul," ſays Fabricio," "doſt thou think it is ſufficient to clear thee, to pretend thou haſt none of the ſpoil? Thou ſhalt not come off ſo. It is enough that you are one of Don Raphael's accomplices, to deſerve an inquiry into your paſt life. You muſt have many things upon your conſcience. Be pleaſed to go to priſon with me, and there thou mayſt make thy general

general confeſſion. This good woman ſhall bear thee company: I doubt not ſhe can tell Monſieur the corregidor a hundred pretty ſtories which will be very entertaining to him." Upon this the two women did what they could to ſweeten us. They filled the chamber with cries, complaints, and lamentations. While the old woman on her knees, ſometimes before the Alguazil, ſometimes before the ſerjeants, endeavoured to excite their compaſſion, Camilla begged me, in the moſt moving manner, to ſave her out of the hands of juſtice. I made as if her prayers had prevailed on me. "Mr Officer," ſaid I to the ſon of Nunnez, "ſince I have my diamond, I am ſatisfied; I would not be the death of this woman." "Don't tell me of your humanity," replied he; "I have ſomething elſe to mind. I muſt diſcharge my office. I have expreſs orders to apprehend theſe wretches: Monſieur the corregidor will make examples of them." "For Heaven's ſake," ſaid I, "don't be ſo cruel, but have mercy upon them, and accept of the preſent theſe ladies will make you for your trouble." "That is another thing," replied he; "that is a figure of rhetoric which is well placed. Come, what is it they will give me!" "I have a pearl necklace," cried Camilla, "and two pendants, of a conſiderable price." "If they came from the Philippine iſles," ſaid he, interrupting her, "I will not meddle with them." "You may be aſſured they are right," replied ſhe, "I warrant they are fine." At the ſame time ſhe ordered the old

old woman to bring a little box, out of which ſhe took the necklace and the pendants. She gave them both to Monſieur the Alguazil. Though he knew no more of pearl than I did, yet he did not queſtion their being right. He looked upon them very attentively, and ſaid, "They appear to be what they ſhould be; and if the ſilver candleſtick which Signior Gil Blas has in his hand, be added to them, I will not anſwer for my fidelity." "I don't believe," cried I to Camilla, "you will break off an accommodation ſo much to your advantage for a trifle." Pronouncing theſe words, I took the candle out, and gave the candleſtick to Fabricio, who contenting himſelf with what was offered, perhaps becauſe he ſaw nothing in the room beſides that could be conveniently carried off, ſaid, "Farewell, my princeſſes, be eaſy, I will ſpeak to Monſieur the corregidor, and repreſent you to him as white as ſnow. We know how to give things what turn we pleaſe, and never make true reports, but when we are not obliged to make falſe ones."

CHAP. V.

The ſequel of the adventure of the recovered ring. Gil Blas quits the practice of phyſic, and the city of Valladolid.

AFter we had thus executed Fabricio's project, we left Camilla's houſe rejoicing at the ſucceſs, which ſurpaſſed our expectation, for we reckoned only upon the ring. We took the reſt as we could get it. We were

were ſo far from making any ſcruple of robbing the courtezans, that we thought we had done a meritorious act. "Gentlemen," ſays Fabricio to us, when we were got into the ſtreet, "I think the beſt thing we can do, is to return to our tavern, and make merry all night. To-morrow we will ſell the candleſtick, the necklace, and the pendants, and divide the money amongſt us, like brethren: this done, each of us ſhall return home, and make the beſt excuſe he can to his maſter." The opinion of Monſieur the Alguazil ſeemed to us to be very judicious: we returned to our tavern, ſome imagining they could eaſily invent an excuſe for lying abroad, and others not caring whether their maſters turned them off or not.

We ordered a good ſupper to be got ready, and ſat down to it with as much appetite as gaiety. We were very pleaſant all the while, and eſpecially Fabricio, who knew how to keep up converſation, diverted the whole company. There eſcaped him I cannot tell how many ſtrokes of Caſtilian wit, as good as the Attic of old. When we were in the midſt of our mirth, an unforeſeen event diſturbed all our joy. A well-made man entered the room where we were at ſupper, attended by two others of moſt unpromiſing aſpect. After theſe came three more, and after them three and three, till they made a dozen. They were armed with carabines, ſwords, and bayonets. We ſoon perceived they were the watch, and it was not hard for us to gueſs their

their buſineſs. We at firſt made a ſhew of reſiſtance; but they ſurrounded us in an inſtant, and kept us quiet, as well on account of their number as their fire-arms. "Gentlemen," ſays the captain of them, with a bantering air, "I underſtand by what artifice you have lately taken a ring from a certain ſhe-adventurer: it was dexterouſly done, and you deſerve a public reward, which without queſtion you will meet with. The law, that has provided a lodging for you, will not fail to acknowledge ſo fine an effort of genius." All thoſe to whom this diſcourſe was addreſſed, were in terrible confuſion. We changed colour, and in our turn were poſſeſſed with the ſame fear as we had occaſioned in Camilla. However, Fabricio, though he looked pale and confounded, offered to juſtify us. "Signior," ſaid he, "we had no ill deſign, and therefore ought to be forgiven this little trick." "What a duce," replied the captain in a heat, "do you call this a little trick? Do not you know that it is a hanging matter? Beſides that, no man is permitted to do juſtice for himſelf: you took a candleſtick, a necklace, and diamond ear-rings; and which is ſtill worſe, to accompliſh this robbery, you turned yourſelves into ſerjeants. Rogues diſguiſe themſelves like honeſt men to do ill. You will be very happy if you eſcape without a halter." When he had given us to underſtand that the matter was more ſerious than we at firſt took it to be, we fell at his feet, and prayed him to have pity on our youth; but

but our prayers were to no purpoſe. He rejected the propoſition we made him to deliver up the candleſtick, the necklace, and the pendants. He refuſed even my ring, perhaps becauſe it was offered in company. In fine, he was inexorable. He cauſed my companions to be diſarmed, and carried us all to priſon. As we were carrying along, one of his ſerjeants told me, that the old woman who lived with Camilla, ſuſpecting us not to be really officers belonging to the courts of juſtice, dogged us to the tavern; and finding her ſuſpicions to be well grounded, ſhe gave information of us to the captain of the watch, to be revenged of us.

The firſt thing the officers did, was to ſearch us. The necklace, the pendants, and the ſilver candleſtick were immediately taken from us. They took from me alſo my ring, and the Philippine iſle rubies, which I had unfortunately in my pockets. Nay, they did not leave me ſo much as the reals I had got that day by my preſcriptions: by which I perceived that the officers belonging to the courts of juſtice at Valladolid underſtood their office as well as thoſe at Aſtorga, and that the manners of thoſe gentlemen were every where alike. While they were taking my jewels and money from me, the captain of the watch reported our adventure to the magiſtrates. The matter was ſo extraordinary, that the greateſt part of them thought we deſerved to be truſſed up for it: others, leſs ſevere, ſaid we might come off for two hundred good

laſhes, and ſome years ſervice at ſea. We were ſhut up in a dungeon, to wait for the ſentence of Monſieur the corregidor. We lay on ſtraw, which was by no means ſo well ſtrewed as that in a ſtable with which horſes are littered. We had ſtaid there longer, and not been let out but to go to the galleys, if Signior Manuel Ordonnez had not heard of our affair, and reſolved to get Fabricio diſcharged; which he could not do, without delivering us alſo. He was a man in great eſteem in the city. He ſpared no ſolicitations; and what by his own credit, and that of his friends, in three days time he procured our diſcharge. But we did not go out of that place as we got in. The candleſtick, the necklace, the pendants, my ring, and the rubies all remained there; which put me in mind of thoſe verſes in Virgil, which begin with theſe words, *Sic vos non vobis*, &c.

As ſoon as we were ſet free, we returned to our maſters. Dr Sangrado received me kindly. "Poor Gil Blas," ſays he, "I did not hear of thy misfortune till this morning. I was preparing to ſolicit for thee vigorouſly. Thou muſt comfort thyſelf for this accident, my friend, and apply more than ever to phyſic." I anſwered, "It was my deſign;" and I did ſo accordingly. So far from wanting buſineſs, that it happened luckily, as my maſter foretold, to be a ſickly time, that he had his hands full of patients. The ſmall-pox and malignant fevers reigned in the city and ſuburbs. All the doctors in Valladolid were

were full of practice, and we in particular. There did not a day go over our heads, but each of us visited eight or ten patients. Of consequence there was a great deal of water drank, and much blood let. But I cannot tell how it happened, they all died. Either we managed them very ill, or their distempers were incurable. We rarely visited the same sick man thrice. At the second, we were either informed that he was going to be buried, or found him at the point of death. Being a young physician, my heart was not sufficiently hardened for murders; I was grieved at so many fatal events, which might be imputed to me. "Sir," said I one evening to Dr Sangrado, "I call Heaven to witness I follow your method exactly, yet all my patients go to the other world. One would think they died on purpose to bring our practice into discredit: I met two carrying to the grave this afternoon." "Child," says he, "I might tell thee the same of myself: I have not often the satisfaction to cure the persons that fall into my hands; and if I was not certain of the principles I follow, I should take my remedies to be contrary to almost all the diseases I have in hand." "If you will be ruled by me, Sir," replied I, "we will change our method, and out of curiosity give our patients some chymical preparations. The worst that can happen is, that they will produce the same effects as our hot water and bleeding." "I would willingly make the experiment," says he, "if it would not have an ill consequence; for

I have publiſhed a book in vindication of frequent bleeding and hot-water drinking. Wouldſt thou have me decry my own work?" "You are in the right, Sir," replied I, "you muſt not give an occaſion to your enemies to triumph over you. They will ſay you have ſuffered yourſelf to be undeceived, you will loſe your reputation; rather let the people, the nobility, and the clergy periſh. Let us continue our wonted practice. Our brethren, after all, notwithſtanding the averſion they have for bleeding, do no greater wonders than we: and I believe our ſpecifics are as good as their drugs."

We proceeded in our old courſe, and in ſuch a manner, that in leſs than ſix weeks we made as many widows and orphans as the ſiege of Troy. One would have thought the plague was in Valladolid, there were ſo many funerals. There came every day to our houſe fathers, to demand an account of the ſons we had robbed them of; or uncles to reproach us for the death of their nephews. As for the nephews and ſons whoſe fathers and uncles fared the worſe for our medicines, they came not to our houſe. The huſbands of the wives we made away with, were alſo very diſcreet, and did not ſcold us on that ſcore. The perſons afflicted, whoſe reproaches it was neceſſary we ſhould wipe off, were ſometimes outrageous in their grief, and called us blockheads and murderers. They kept no bounds; I was enraged at their epithets; but my maſter, who had been uſed to it, was not

not at all concerned at it. Perhaps I ſhould have accuſtomed myſelf to them as well as he, if heaven, doubtleſs to take away one of the ſcourges of the ſick at Valladolid, had not given me a diſguſt to phyſic, which I practiſed with ſo little ſucceſs.

There was a tennis-court in our neighbourhood, where the idle met every day: among whom was one who ſet up for judge and bully of the place He was a Biſcayan, and his name *Don Rodriguez de Mondragon.* He was about thirty years old, not very tall, but lean, ſparkling, and ſtrong. Beſides two little eyes that rolled in his head, and which ſeemed to threaten all whom he looked upon, he had a flat noſe which hung over a red muſtachio that curled up to his temple. He ſpoke ſo hoarſe and ſo haſtily, that he made every one afraid. This bully had made himſelf tyrant of the tennis-court. His deciſions among the players were all arbitrary and imperious; and there was no appealing from his judgment without running the riſk of a challenge. This Signior Don Rodrigo, who, though he put a Don before his name, was no better than a butcher, had gained the affections of the miſtreſs of the houſe. She was a rich widow of about forty years old, pretty well for her perſon. Her huſband had been dead about a year and a quarter. I cannot imagine how ſhe could take a liking to this bully of the racket; it was not for his beauty, ſhe muſt ſee ſomething in him that nobody elſe did. Be it as it will, ſhe

had a kindneſs for him, and reſolved to marry him. But as all things were making ready for conſummation, ſhe fell ſick; and it was her bad luck to have me for her phyſician. If her diſtemper had not been a malignant fever, my remedy was ſufficient to make it one. In four days time I put all the tennis-court into mourning. The miſtreſs of it went the ſame way I ſent all my patients, and her relations took poſſeſſion of her eſtate. Don Rodrigo, made deſperate by the loſs of his miſtreſs, or rather the hope of a very advantageous match, was not contented with flinging fire and flames at me; he ſwore he would run me through the guts, where-ever he met me. A charitable neighbour gave me information of his oath, and adviſed me not to go out of our houſe, for fear of meeting this devil of a man. This advice, which I had no mind to neglect, filled me with trouble and fear. The Biſcayan was always in my mind, and before my eyes; I could not be at reſt a moment. This made me out of love with phyſic; and I thought of nothing but how to deliver myſelf from the apprehenſion in which I lived. I took my embroidered coat again; and having bid my maſter adieu, notwithſtanding the many arguments he uſed, to perſuade me to ſtay with him, I left the city at break of day, not without fear of meeting Don Rodrigo in my way.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

What road he took when he left Valladolid; and what man he met by the way.

I Made as much haſte as I could when I got out of the town; and every now and then looked behind me to ſee if I was not purſued by the terrible Biſcayan. My head was ſo full of him, that I took every tree and buſh to be him. My heart failed me at the leaſt noiſe: and I did not think myſelf ſafe till I got two or three leagues off Valladolid. I then ſlackened pace, and jogged on pretty cheerfully towards Madrid, whither I propoſed to myſelf to go. I was ſorry for nothing in departing from Valladolid, but leaving Fabricio, my dear Pylades, to whom I had not time to bid adieu. I did not grieve for loſing the profeſſion of a phyſician; on the contrary, I begged God to forgive me for having practiſed it at all. I was well pleaſed however with the money I had in my pocket, though it was the purchaſe of my murders. I was like thoſe women that leave off whoring, but keep ſtill the money they made of it. I had as many reals as came to five ducats. That was all my ſtock. I depended upon it to carry me to Madrid, where I doubted not I ſhould get a good place. Beſides, I longed mightily to ſee that city, which I heard ſo much talk of, as being an epitome of all the world's wonders.

While I was meditating on what had been told me of it, and pleaſing myſelf with the thoughts

thoughts of what I ſhould ſee there, I heard a man behind me coming on ſinging. He had a knapſack at his back, a guitar hanging about his neck, and a long ſword by his ſide. He walked ſo faſt, that he ſoon overtook me. It was one of the journeymen-barbers that had been impriſoned with me about the adventure of the ring. We knew one another preſently, and were ſurpriſed to meet thus unexpectedly on the highway. I expreſſed a great joy at having him for a companion, and he did as much on my account. I told him why I left Valladolid; and he, on his part, informed me that he had had a quarrel with his maſter, and they had mutually bidden one another adieu for ever. "If I would have ſtaid at Valladolid," added he, "there are ten ſhops I could have had my choice of; for, without vanity, I may ſay there is not a barber in Spain that knows how to handle a razor like me, or curl a muſtachio: but I have a mind to return to my own country, from whence I have been ten years abſent. I want to breathe ſome of my native air, and know how it goes with my relations. It will not be long before I ſhall be with them; for they dwell but at Olmedo, a great village on this ſide Segovia."

I reſolved to accompany the barber to that village, and thence go to Segovia, to get ſome convenience to convey myſelf to Madrid. We fell into diſcourſe of indifferent things as we continued our journey. He was a good-humoured merry lad; and after we had travelled

velled together about an hour, he aſked me if my ſtomach was not come? I replied, he ſhould ſee that at the firſt inn we came to. "Let us not ſtay for that," ſays he, "I have ſomewhat to breakfaſt on in my budget. I always carry proviſions with me when I travel the road. I do not burthen myſelf with cloaths, linen, and ſuch uſeleſs luggage. I put nothing in it, but proviſions of the mouth, my razors, and waſh-balls." I applauded his prudence, and conſented to halt with him. I was hungry, and propoſed to make a meal on my comrade's cargo, after what he had ſaid of it. We went into a by-place, and ſat down on the graſs. The barber pulled out his provender, which conſiſted of five or ſix onions, a piece of bread, and ſome cheeſe. But what he valued himſelf on, was a bottle, which he ſaid was full of rare wine. Though our entertainment was not very nice, yet we were ſo hungry, that neither of us found fault with it. We emptied the bottle, which held about a quart, and did not contain any thing worthy the panegyric the barber beſtowed upon it. When we had thus breakfaſted, we roſe, and proceeded very gaily on our journey. Fabricio had told me that this barber had met with many adventures; and he deſiring me to tell him mine, in hopes of hearing them, I gave him ſatisfaction. I then prayed him to oblige me, by giving me the ſtory of his life. "My ſtory," cried he, "is not worth telling. It has nothing in it but plain facts. However, ſince we have no better

ter ſubject to diſcourſe of, I will tell it you, ſuch as it is." Accordingly he began it in the following manner.

CHAP. VII.

The ſtory of the Journeyman-barber.

FErnand Perez de la Fuente my grandfather, (I love to trace things from the beginning), after having lived a barber fifty years in the village of Olmedo, died, and left four ſons behind him: the eldeſt, called *Nicolas*, poſſeſſed himſelf of his ſhop, and ſucceeded him in his profeſſion. The ſecond ſon, Bertrand, took to a trade, and became a mercer. Thomas, the third, was a ſchoolmaſter. And Pedro, the fourth, finding he had a genius for the belles letters, ſold a ſmall eſtate he had, and went to make the moſt of it at Madrid. The three other brothers remained at Olmedo, where they married three young women, labourers daughters, who brought them not much money: but to make amends for it, they bleſſed them with abundance of children. They ſeemed to outvie one another in getting them. My mother, for her part, was fairly delivered of ſix in the five firſt years of her marriage. I was one of them. My father taught me to ſhave betimes; and when I was fifteen years of age, he put this knapſack on my back, tied a long ſword to my ſide, and ſaid, "Go, Diego, thou art now able to get thy living; go travel the country, it will teach thee thy trade better than ſtaying at home:

home: go, and let me not ſee thee at Olmedo again, till thou haſt ſeen all Spain. Let me not ſo much as hear thee named." At theſe words he embraced me cordially, and turned me out of doors.

This was the farewell I had from my father. As for my mother, ſhe had not ſuch a hard heart. She ſeemed troubled at my going: the tears trickled down her cheeks; and ſhe ſlipt a ducat into my hand. I left Olmedo in this condition, and took the road to Segovia. I had not gone two hundred yards before I examined my budget; I longed to ſee what was in the inſide of it, and to have an exact knowledge of my treaſure. I found a razor-caſe, with two razors in it, very well worn, a leather to ſet them upon, and a bit of ſoap. Beſides this, there was a new canvas ſhirt, and a pair of my father's old ſhoes; and what rejoiced my heart more than all the reſt, twenty reals in an old rag. This was my ſtock. You may perceive by this, that Mr Nicolas the barber depended very much on my dexterity, ſince he accoutred me ſo indifferently. Nevertheleſs, the poſſeſſion of a ducat and twenty reals muſt needs be charming to a young man. I thought my purſe would be inexhauſtible, and went on tranſported with joy, ſometimes looking on my rapier, which hung at my heels, and every now and then got between my legs, and was like to overſet me.

I arrived in the evening at Ataquines very hungry. I lodged at an inn; and, as if I was in circumſtances to ſpend my money freely,

ly, demanded of my landlord what he had for ſupper? My landlord looked upon me wiſtfully; and perceiving what ſort of a man he had to do with, he ſaid, "We will ſatisfy you, young gentleman; you ſhall be treated like a prince." He then led me into a little room, where, half an hour after, they brought me an old rabbit, which, in all probability, had been the mother of many that had made ragouts laſt year. They accompanied this admirable diſh with ſome wine, "ſo good," ſays he, "the king does not drink better." However, I perceived it was pricked; but I ſwallowed it as greedily as I did the rabbit, which being too tough to be diſpatched by the teeth, went down in whole pieces. To finiſh my treatment like a prince, I was put into a bed much more proper to keep a man awake than aſleep. It was ſo ſhort, I could not ſtretch out my legs, as ſhort as I was myſelf. The bottom was only a little ſtraw, and that of the coarſeſt ſort: Atop was a ſheet doubled, which had perhaps ſerved a hundred travellers ſince the laſt waſhing. Nevertheleſs, my ſtomach was ſo full of the old coney, and the delicious wine my landlord boaſted of, that, thanks to my youth and my conſtitution, I ſlept ſoundly, and paſſed the night without indigeſtion. The next day, when I had breakfaſted, and paid well for my good cheer, I went on my journey, and arrived ſafely at Segovia. I was no ſooner there, than by good luck I lighted on a ſhop where I was received for my board and lodging. I ſtaid there

there ſix months only. A journeyman-barber, whom I came acquainted with, debauched me, and I departed with him for Madrid. I eaſily got a place there on the ſame terms as at Segovia. It was a well-accuſtomed ſhop. It ſtood near the church of St Creſs; and its neighbourhood to the prince's theatre brought a croud of cuſtomers to it. My maſter's two journeymen and I were hardly enow to ſhave them. I ſaw people of all conditions, and among others, players and authors. Two of the latter happened to be one day together in our ſhop: they talked of nothing but the poets and poems of the time. Among the former I heard them name my uncle, which made me more attentive to what they ſaid. "Don Juan de Zavaleta," ſays one of them, "is an author which the public ought not to make account of. He has no fire nor fancy. His laſt play is intolerable." "And what is Louis Velez de Guevara worth, I pray?" replied the other; "was there ever ſuch ſtuff ſeen?" They then named ſeveral other poets, whoſe names I have forgotten. I only remember they railed at them plentifully. As for my uncle, they made honourable mention of him. They both agreed that he was a man of merit. "Yes," cries one of them, "Don Pedro de la Fuente is an excellent author. There is a great deal of pleaſantry and learning in his works, which are picquant, and full of ſalt. I do not wonder both court and town like him, and that he has ſeveral penſions from the grandees. He has ſaved a

good parcel of money out of them. He has his lodging and diet at the Duke de Medina Celi's. He ſpends nothing; and muſt be very rich." I loſt not a word of what the poets ſaid of my uncle. We had heard at home that he made a noiſe at Madrid by his writings; ſome people who paſſed through Olmedo told us ſo: but he never letting us hear from him, and ſeeming to ſhake us off, our family did not trouble their heads about him. However, I reſolved not to loſe ſuch an opportunity, but to make myſelf known to him as ſoon as I found how it was with him, and knew where he lived. One thing perplexed me a little; the authors called him *Don Pedro*. This *Don* gave me ſome difficulty, and I was afraid it might be ſome other poet, and not my uncle. Nevertheleſs, I came to a reſolution to ſee whether it was he, or no. I imagined he might become a gentleman as well as a wit. In order to find him out, I dreſſed myſelf one morning, and with my maſter's leave went to viſit him, not a little proud to be the nephew of a man who had acquired ſuch a reputation by his genius. Barbers are not the leaſt ſuſceptible of vanity of any men in the world. I began to have a great opinion of myſelf; and walking with a ſtately air, I inquired the way to the Duke de Medina Celi's. When I came to the gate, I aſked the porter for Signior Don Pedro de la Fuente. The porter hearing him named, pointed to a little ſtaircaſe at the farther end of a court, and ſaid, "Go up thoſe ſtairs, and knock

knock at the firſt door on the right hand." I did as he bade me: I knocked at the door. A young man came out to me, of whom I demanded if Signior Don Pedro de la Fuente lodged there? "Yes," replied he; "but you cannot ſpeak with him at preſent." "I ſhould be glad to have one word with him," ſaid I, "becauſe I bring him ſome news from his relations." "If you brought news from the Pope," replied he, "I would not introduce you now into his chamber. He is writing; and when he writes, one muſt have a care of diſturbing him. He will not be viſible till noon: go, and return at that time." I went thence into the city, which I walked about, contemplating the reception I ſhould have from my uncle. "I believe," ſaid I to myſelf, "he will be overjoyed to ſee me." I judged of him by myſelf, and expected that our meeting would be a very joyful one. I did not fail of returning at the time appointed. "You are come very opportunely," ſays his valet; "my maſter is going out; ſtay a little, I will tell him you are here." He left me in the antechamber, returned a moment after, and conducted me to his maſter, who I preſently knew to be my uncle, he was ſo like uncle Thomas. I ſaluted him with a moſt profound reverence, and told him I was the ſon of Maſter Nicolas de la Fuente, barber, at Olmedo: that I had followed the ſame trade as a journeyman in Madrid three weeks, and intended to travel all Spain to improve myſelf. While I was ſpeaking, I obſerved my uncle

muſed. It was plain he was in ſuſpenſe whether to diſown me, or ſhake me off as dexterouſly as he could. He choſe the latter. He affected to ſmile; and ſaid, "Well, friend, how do thy father and thy uncle do? how does it go with them?" I then began to give him an account of the copious propagation of our familly. I named him all the children male and female, and added to the liſt their godfathers and godmothers. He did not ſeem to be much concerned at what I ſaid; and when I had done, "Diego," ſaid he, "I approve mightily of thy travelling the country to perfect thyſelf in thy trade; and I adviſe thee not to ſtay any longer in Madrid. It is a place deſtructive to youth: thou wilt be ruined here, child: thou wilt do better to go to the other cities of the kingdom; people are not ſo corrupt there. Go then," continued he; "and when thou art about to depart, let me ſee thee again. I will give thee a piſtole to carry thee through Spain." At theſe words he puſhed me ſoftly out of the room, and ſent me home.

I had not the ſenſe to perceive that he wanted to have me out of Madrid. I returned to our ſhop, and gave my maſter an account of my viſit. He had no more thoughts than I of my uncle Don Pedro's intention. "I am not of his opinion," ſaid he: "inſtead of running rambling about the country, you had better fix yourſelf in the city. Your uncle knows ſo many people of quality, he may eaſily get you a place in a good family, and by

by degrees you may make your fortune there." I liked this diſcourſe extremely, and two days after went to my uncle again, to propoſe to him to make uſe of his credit to get me a place in ſome nobleman's houſe: but he did not approve of the propoſal. A vain man, who dined every day with one perſon of quality or other, was not willing to ſee his nephew at the footman's table, while he was at the lord's. Little Diego would have made Signior Don Pedro bluſh. He fell upon me therefore, and reproved me then with a very angry look, "How! you young raſcal you! Will you leave your trade? What rogues have been adviſing thee to thy ruin? Go to them, get out of my apartment, and never ſet foot here again, otherwiſe I ſhall have thee chaſtiſed as thou deſerveſt." Theſe words ſtunned me, much more the tone with which my uncle ſpoke them. I retired with the tears in my eyes, very much troubled that he ſhould be ſo cruel to me. But being naturally lively and proud, I ſoon gave over weeping. My grief turned to indignation; and I reſolved to leave ſo ill a relation where I found him, having hitherto lived without him. I thought of nothing but cultivating my talent. I minded my buſineſs. I ſhaved day and night: and to recreate myſelf now and then, learned to play on the guitarre. My maſter on that inſtrument was an old Signior Eſcudero, whom I ſhaved. He had formerly been a chantor in a cathedral. His name was *Marcus d' Obregon*. He was a diſcreet perſon, and had as

much wit as experience. He loved me as dearly as if I had been his own ſon. He was gentleman-uſher to a doctor's wife, who lived about thirty yards off us. I uſed to go to him every night when I had done work; and we two ſitting on the threſhold of the door, made a little concert, with which the neighbourhood was not at all diſpleaſed. Not that we had very good voices, but we both performed our parts pretty well, at leaſt enough to pleaſe thoſe that heard us. We particularly diverted Donna Margellina the doctor's wife. She came into the entry to hearken to us, and obliged us to give her ſome encores, when the airs were to her liking. Her huſband was as well entertained with us as ſhe was. Though he was a Spaniard and an old man, he was not in the leaſt jealous of her. Beſides, his practice took him up wholly; and as he uſed to come home every night from viſiting his patients very much fatigued, ſo he went to bed betimes, and did not mind our ſerenading his wife. Perhaps he thought our muſic was not ſo charming as to make any dangerous impreſſions upon her; and he had too much confidence in his wife's conduct to ſuſpect her. Margellina was young and handſome, but withal ſo coy, that ſhe would hardly ſuffer a man to ogle her. She did not think there was any harm in liſtening to our muſic; and we might ſing or play as much as we pleaſed, ſhe took no offence at it.

Coming one evening to the doctor's door, intending

intending to divert myſelf there, according to cuſtom, I found the old gentleman-uſher waiting for me. He took me by the hand, and ſaid, he would have me take a walk before we began our concert. He then led me into a by-ſtreet, where, thinking we were private enough, he began his diſcourſe thus, in a melancholy tone: "Don Diego, I have ſomething to tell you in particular. I am afraid, child, that we ſhall both of us repent amuſing ourſelves every night with ſerenades at my maſter's door. I have certainly a kindneſs for you. I am glad I have taught you to play on the guitarre, and ſing: but if I had foreſeen the miſchief that is likely to come of it, I ſhould have made choice of another place for us to practiſe our leſſons in." I was frighted at what he ſaid, and deſired him to explain himſelf; for if we were in any danger, I ſhould be willing to get out of it as faſt as I could. "I will tell you," replied he, "what I have to ſay, and then gueſs you the danger.

"When I entered into the doctor's ſervice, which was about a year ago, he told me one morning, preſenting me to his wife, "That is your miſtreſs, Marcos; you are to wait on her where-ever ſhe goes." I was extremely taken with Donna Margellina, I thought her wonderfully handſome, and was particularly charmed with her fine carriage." "Signior," replied I to the doctor, "I am too happy in ſerving ſo lovely a lady." Margellina was diſpleaſed at what I ſaid, and cried, "You are a pretty fellow indeed, and take upon you more

more than becomes you. I ſhall not ſuffer ſuch things to be ſaid to me." Such rude words from ſuch ſweet lips were a ſtrange ſurpriſe to me. I could not reconcile them to the ſoftneſs of her air. Her huſband was uſed to them, and valued himſelf upon having a wife of ſo rare a character. "Marcos," ſays he to me, "my wife is a prodigy of virtue;" and perceiving ſhe was putting on her ſcarf, and preparing to go to church, he bade me attend her. We were no ſooner got into the ſtreet, than, what is not extraordinary in ſuch caſes, ſeveral men ſmitten with the beauty of Donna Margellina, ſaid very kind things to her as ſhe paſſed along. You cannot imagine what ſilly and ridiculous anſwers ſhe made them. They were all amazed; and could not conceive that there was a woman in the world who did not love to be flattered. "Do not you hear, Madam," ſaid I, "what thoſe gentlemen ſay to you? One had better be ſilent than give hard words." "No, no," replied ſhe, "I will have thoſe inſolent fellows know that I am not a woman who will ſuffer them to fail in their reſpect to me." In ſhort, ſhe was ſo impertinent that I could not help telling her what I thought of it, whether ſhe liked it or no. I repreſented to her, with as much ſubmiſſion as I could, that ſhe did an injury to nature, and ſpoiled a thouſand good qualities by her ſavage humour; that a complaiſant well-bred woman might render herſelf amiable without the aſſiſtance of beauty; whereas a beautiful woman, without good breeding

breeding and complaiſance, would become contemptible. A great deal more I ſaid upon the ſame ſubject, tending all to correct her manners. I was afraid ſhe would have reſented my leſſons, and given me a ſevere reproof for them; but ſhe bore them, contenting herſelf with taking notice of what I ſaid then, or at other times to the ſame purpoſe. I grew weary of admoniſhing her in vain, and abandoned her to the fierceneſs of her nature. In the mean time, what do ye think? this rude temper, this proud woman is within theſe two months entirely altered. She is civil and good-humoured to every body. She is not the ſame Margellina, who always anſwered men rudely. She now ſays the moſt obliging things in the world. She likes now to be flattered, to be told ſhe is handſome, and that a man cannot look on her with ſafety. One can hardly imagine how ſhe is changed; and what you ought to be moſt ſurpriſed at, is, you yourſelf are the occaſion of ſo great a miracle: yes, my Dear Diego," continues he, "it is you who have thus metamorphoſed Donna Margellina: you have turned the tigreſs into a lamb; in a word, all her thoughts run upon you. I have obſerved it more than once; and either I don't know what ſort of creatures women are, or ſhe is paſſionately in love with you. This, my ſon, is the ſad news I have to acquaint you with, and the unhappy conjuncture we are fallen into."

"I don't ſee," replied I to the old ſquire, "that there is any thing in all this which we need

need very much grieve for; nor that it is a misfortune for me to be beloved by a pretty lady." "You talk like a young man, Diego," ſaid he; "you don't perceive the ſnake that is in the graſs. You have regard to nothing but the pleaſure, but I have reſpect to the pains with which it is attended. It will all come out at laſt. If you continue to ſing at our door, you will inflame Margellina ſtill more and more; and ſhe will perhaps in the end become ſo weak as to let Dr Oloroſo her huſband ſee it. Though he is now ſo very complaiſant, becauſe he thinks he has no reaſon to be jealous; he will then grow enraged againſt thee, and be revenged on her; and you may imagine that neither you nor I ſhall come off very well on this occaſion." "Well, Signior Marcos," replied I, "I ſubmit to your reaſons, and will follow your advice." "All that we need do," ſays he, "is, to give over our ſerenades. Don't you appear before my miſtreſs any more. When ſhe does not ſee you, ſhe will be quiet: ſtay at home, I will come to you; and we may play there upon the guitarre without running any riſk." "Agreed," replied I, "and I promiſe you never to ſet foot within your doors more." Indeed I reſolved not to ſing again at the doctor's gate, but to keep cloſe to my ſhop, ſince I was a perſon ſo dangerous to be ſeen.

However, honeſt Marcos found in a little time that the means he propoſed to extinguiſh Donna Margellina's fires, had a quite contrary effect. The lady finding that we did not

ſing

ſing for two nights together, aſked him why we gave over our concert, and what was the reaſon ſhe did not ſee me?" He anſwered, "I was ſo buſy that I had not a moment to ſpare for pleaſure." She ſeemed ſatisfied with that excuſe, and bore my abſence for three days longer pretty well; but then ſhe loſt all patience, and ſaid to her gentleman-uſher, "You impoſe upon me, Marcos; Diego has ſome other reaſon for not coming hither. Tell me what it is, I command you; hide nothing from me." I invented a new excuſe for him. "Madam," ſaid I, "ſince you will know all, I muſt tell you, that after we have been playing our concert, it has often happened when he came home, that the buttery has been locked up, and he has been forced to go to bed ſupperleſs." "How! ſupperleſs," cried ſhe in a paſſion. "Why did not you tell me ſo before? Poor child, go to him preſently; bring him hither to-night; he ſhall not go home without his ſupper; I ſhall always have ſomething got for him here."

"What is this!" ſaid the gentleman-uſher, making as if he was ſurpriſed at her diſcourſe. "Heaven! Is it you, Madam, who talk after this rate? What a change is here? How long have you been ſo compaſſionate;" "How long!" replied ſhe, very briſkly; "ever ſince you came hither; or rather, ever ſince you ſchooled me for my ill nature, and reproved the rudeneſs of my manners. "But alas!" with a languiſhing look, "I have gone from one extreme to another: from proud

proud and inſenſible, I am become too ſoft and too tender. I love your young friend, Diego, and cannot help it. His abſence, inſtead of weakening my paſſion, ſtrengthens it." "Is it poſſible," anſwered the old ſquire, "that a young man who is neither handſome nor well ſhaped ſhould be the object of ſo ſtrong a paſſion? I ſhould pardon your ſentiments, if they had been inſpired by ſome gentleman, a man of worth." "Ah Marcos," interrupted Margellina, "I am not like the reſt of my ſex; or elſe, with all your experience, you know not what to make of them. If I can tell any thing, they love without conſideration. Love is a witchcraft of the mind, that directs one to an object, and fixes one to it, maugre all our reſiſtance. It is a diſeaſe that ſeizes us like the madneſs of dogs, and other animals. Therefore don't tell me that Diego is unworthy of my paſſion. It is enough that I love him, to find in him a thouſand qualities that you do not ſee, and perhaps he does not poſſeſs. It is in vain for you to repreſent to me that his face and his ſhape are not worth my regard. To me he ſeems as fair as the day, and made on purpoſe to charm. Further, his voice has a ſweetneſs that raviſhes me; and he plays on the guitarre with a grace peculiar to himſelf." "But, Madam," replied Marcos, "do you conſider his condition? that he is ——." "I conſider nothing but him," interrupted ſhe; "and if I were a woman of quality, I ſhould not mind that."

The reſult of this conference was, that the old

old uſher finding he was not like to gain any thing by his arguments, gave over oppoſing his miſtreſs's inclination; as a ſkilful pilot gives way to a tempeſt which drives him from the port whither he was bound. He did more to ſatisfy his patroneſs. He came to me, and taking me aſide, told me what had paſſed between her and him. "You ſee, Diego," ſays he, "we cannot avoid continuing our concerts at Margellina's door. It muſt be ſo, friend; the lady muſt ſee you again, or ſhe will do ſome fooliſh thing or other which will be more prejudicial to her reputation." I was not ſo cruel as to deny him. I replied, that I would come to her houſe in the evening with my guitarre, and he might carry that welcome news to his miſtreſs. He did ſo; and ſhe was tranſported to hear it, waiting with impatience for the time appointed to ſee me, and liſten to my muſic.

In the mean while an unlucky accident had like to have ſpoiled all. I could not go from my maſter's before night, which for my ſins proved very dark. I gropped my way through the ſtreet, and had gone about half my journey, when a window opened, and I was ſaluted with a ſhower, which, I can aſſure you, was not of eſſence. I had all of it; and in thoſe circumſtances could not tell what to reſolve on. If I returned home in that condition, I ſhould be laughed at; and I could not think of going to Margellina in ſo filthy and unſavoury a plight. However, I was ſo eager to renew my concert, that I got thither

before I was aware of it, and found the old 'Squire waiting for me at the door. He told me Dr Oloroſo was gone to bed, and that we might divert ourſelves very freely. I replied, "I muſt in the firſt place clean myſelf." I then informed him of the diſgrace I had met with. He condoled with me, and carried me to a hall, where his miſtreſs ſtaid for us. As ſoon as ſhe knew of my adventure, and ſaw how it was with me, ſhe pitied me as much as if the greateſt misfortune had befallen me. She afterwards fell a-raving at the perſon that had ſo ſerved me. "Pray, Madam," ſays Marcos, "do not be in ſuch a paſſion: it does not deſerve it." "How!" replied ſhe; "ſhould I not curſe the wicked creature that has ſo treated this little lamb, this dove without gall, who does not ſo much as complain of the outrage that is done him? Ah! that I was a man, I would this minute revenge him."

Many other things ſhe ſaid, which ſhewed the exceſs of her love; nor were her actions leſs expreſſive of it than her words: for while Marcos was wiping me with a napkin, ſhe ran to her chamber, and fetched a box of perfume; ſhe burnt odoriferous drugs, and perfumed my cloaths. She afterwards ſprinkled eſſences upon them abundantly. The fumigation and aſperſion being over, this charitable woman went herſelf to the kitchen for ſome bread, wine, and roaſted mutton, which ſhe had ordered to be ſet aſide for me. She made me eat, and took pleaſure in helping me.

me. Sometimes ſhe would cut my meat, ſometimes fill out my wine, whatever we could do to hinder her. When I had ſupped, the gentlemen of the concert prepared their guitarres, and tuned their voices. We played a ſymphony, at which Margellina was charmed. Indeed we affected to ſing ſome airs the words of which humoured her paſſion; and it muſt be remembered, that as I played, I now and then caſt a ſoft look at her, which was freſh fuel to her flame, and I began to think it no diſagreeable game. Though the concert laſted a good while, I was not tired with it. As for the lady, who thought the hours were but moments, ſhe would willingly have hearkened to us all night, if the old uſher, who thought the moments were hours, had not often put her in mind that it grew late. She gave him the trouble to repeat it ten times to her: but ſhe had to do with one that was indefatigable therein; and would not let her be quiet, till I left the houſe. He was a man of prudence and diſcretion; and ſeeing his miſtreſs gave herſelf over to the pleaſing her paſſion, he was afraid ſomething ill might betide us, if he did not prevent it. This fear was but too well grounded; the doctor either miſtruſting ſome ſecret intrigue, or being poſſeſſed by that devil Jealouſy, who had ſpared him till then, cenſured our concerts; and not long after forbade them, without telling his reaſons for it, ſaying only, he would not have ſtrangers entertained at his houſe. Marcos informed me of it; and as it

had reſpect to me in particular, I was very much mortified at it. I had conceived hopes which I was loath to loſe.

But to relate things as becomes a faithful hiſtorian, I confeſs it to you, that I bore this misfortune with patience. It was not ſo with Margellina; ſhe could not bear it. "Dear Marcos," cried ſhe to her uſher, "it is from you alone I look for aſſiſtance. Manage it ſo, I pray you, that I may ſee Diego in private." "What would you have of me?" replied the old man in a fury; "I have already humoured you too much. I ſhall not contribute to the diſhonour of my maſter, by ſatisfying your ardent deſires; nor will I ſacrifice your reputation, and cover myſelf with infamy. I, whoſe conduct, as a faithful domeſtic, has always been unbleamable, I had rather quit your ſervice than do ſo baſe an action." "Ah! Marcos," interrupted the lady, whom theſe laſt words frighted, "you kill me when you talk of leaving me. Cruel as you are; will you abandon me, after having brought me into this miſerable condition? Reſtore to me my pride, and that ſavage temper which you took from me. Ah, that I had ſtill thoſe happy defects! I ſhould now be at eaſe, whereas your indiſcreet remonſtrances have raviſhed from me the repoſe I once enjoyed. You have corrupted my manners by endeavouring to correct them. But ah!" continued ſhe, weeping, "why do I blame you, why reproach you unjuſtly? No, no, father, you are not the author of my misfortune.

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It is my ill fate that prepares ſo much affliction for me. Do not take notice, I conjure you, of my extravagant diſcourſe. My paſſion, alas! diſorders my mind. Pity my weakneſs: all my conſolation is in you; and if my life is dear to you, do not refuſe me your aſſiſtance." Saying this, ſhe wept afreſh, and her tears choked her words. She pulled out her pocket-handkerchief, and throwing it over her face, fell into a chair like a perſon overwhelmed with grief. Old Marcos, who perhaps knew the buſineſs of his poſt as well as any gentleman-uſher in Spain, could not ſtand out againſt ſo moving a ſpectacle. It touched him to the quick. He wept as well as his miſtreſs, and ſaid to her very tenderly, "Ah! Madam, you are enough to ſeduce any body. I cannot reſiſt your afflictions. It overcomes my virtue; I promiſe you my ſuccour; and do not wonder love has the power to make you forget your duty, ſince compaſſion only is capable of withdrawing me from mine. Thus this old uſher, notwithſtanding his unblameable conduct, devoted himſelf very obligingly to Margellina's paſſion. He came one morning to acquaint me with all this; and told me when he left me, that he had already contrived a way to procure me a ſecret interview with the lady. This gave me new hopes. But two hours after I had other ſort of news. An apothecary's man, one of our cuſtomers, entered our ſhop to be ſhaved. While I was ſetting my razor, he ſaid, "Do

you know, Signior Diego, what is the matter with your friend the old gentleman-uſher Marcos d'Obregon, and why Dr Oloroſo has turned him away?" I replied, "No." "It is certainly true," anſwered he; "he was turned off juſt as I came hither. I learned it from Signior Oloroſo himſelf, who came to our houſe, and diſcourſing with my maſter, told him, he had diſmiſſed his old uſher, being reſolved to put his wife under the care of a faithful, ſevere, and vigilant duenna, deſiring him to recommend him to one." "I underſtand you," ſaid my maſter, interrupting him: "you would have ſuch a one as Dame Melancia, who was governante to my wife, and who is ſtill in my houſe, though I have been a widower theſe ſix weeks. I can ill ſpare her; but will part with her to you, in whoſe honour I have a particular intereſt; you may truſt her with the guardianſhip of your forehead. She is the pink of duennas, and a dragon, where the chaſtity of the ſex is concerned. During the twelve years that ſhe lived with my wife, who, as you know, wanted neither youth nor beauty, I never ſaw the ſhadow of a gallant in my houſe. And truly ſhe had at firſt no very eaſy taſk of it. I muſt own the defunct had once a very great inclination to coquetry; but Dame Melancia reclaimed her, and inſtilled into her a love of virtue. In fine, this governante is a treaſure; and you will thank me a thouſand times for making a preſent of her to you." The doctor expreſſed himſelf to be mightily obliged to my

my maſter for this favour; and they two agreed that the duenna ſhould this very day ſupply the place of the old uſher."

This news gave a terrible diſturbance to the ideas of pleaſure which I began to entertain myſelf with; and ſoon after Marcos came himſelf to confirm all that the apothecary's man had told me. "Dear Diego," ſays he, "I am overjoyed that Dr Oloroſo has turned me out of his houſe. How much trouble will it ſave me? Beſides diſcharging me from a baſe employment, what perplexity ſhould I have been in to bring you and Margellina together! Thank Heaven, I am delivered from that trouble, and the danger which attended it. On your part, you, my ſon, ought to comfort yourſelf for the loſs of a few ſweet moments, by conſidering the cares, anxieties, and pains that would have followed after." I hearkened to Marcos's leſſons the more attentively, becauſe I gave over all hopes of ſeeing Margellina again. I was not one of thoſe obſtinate lovers who are ſharpened by obſtacles; and though I had been one of them, the character of Dame Melancia was enough to diſcourage me. However, as terrible a dragon as ſhe had been repreſented to me, I found two or three days after, that the doctor's wife had thrown this Argus into a ſleep, or corrupted her virtue; for as I was going to ſhave one of my neighbours, a good old woman ſtopped me in the ſtreet, aſking me if my name was not Diego de la Fuente? I replied, "Yes." "Then you are the man I look for,"

for," anſwered ſhe. "Come to-night to Donna Margellina's door; and when you are there, make it known by ſome ſign, and you ſhall be let into the houſe." "What ſign?" ſaid I; "that ſhould be agreed upon beforehand. I can counterfeit a cat to the life: I will mew before the door ſeveral times." "It is enough," replied this agent of love. "I will tell her your anſwer. Your ſervant, Signior Diego. Heaven bleſs you: Ah what a kind creature you are! I wiſh I was but fifteen years old for your ſake, I would not ſeek you for another." At theſe words the meſſenger of gallantry left me; and you may well imagine that her meſſage raiſed a furious ſtorm in my mind. Farewell Marcos's morality. I waited for night impatiently: and when I thought Dr Oloroſo was abed, I went to his gate. I mewed ſeveral times, as a ſignal that I was come, and did it ſo cleverly, that it was without doubt an honour to the maſter who ſhewed me ſo fine an art. A moment afterwards Margellina came ſoftly to the door, opened it herſelf, and ſhut it as ſoon as I was in the houſe. We went to the hall where our laſt concert was performed, and there was only the light of a ſmall lamp in the chimney. We ſat down cloſe to each other for the convenience of diſcourſe, and were both in a confuſion; a confuſion, it is true, cauſed by the pleaſure of our meeting; but mine had alſo a mixture of fear. My princeſs in vain aſſured me that we had nothing to apprehend on account of her huſband. I ſhook every

every joint of me; and it was plain that was not at all the trembling of a lover. "Madam," ſaid I, "how could you deceive the vigilance of your governante? After what I have heard of Dame Melancia, I did not think it poſſible for me ever to hear from you, much leſs to ſee you again in private." Donna Margellina ſmiled at this diſcourſe, and anſwered me, "You will not be ſurpriſed at this private meeting of ours, when I have told you what has paſſed between my duenna and me. When ſhe entered this houſe, my huſband careſſed her in an extraordinary manner, telling me he gave me up to the conduct of that diſcreet lady, who was a ſample of all the virtues, a looking-glaſs that I was to have inceſſantly before my eyes, to learn diſcretion by her. He added, this admirable perſon governed an apothecary's wife, a friend of mine, twelve years, and that in ſuch a manner, that ſhe made a perfect ſaint of her. This panegyric, which Dame Melancia's four looks confirmed, coſt me many a tear, and flung me into deſpair. I imagined how I was to be lectured by her from morning to-night, and reprimanded all day long. In a word, I expected to become the moſt miſerable woman in the world; which made me not to matter how I treated a duenna, from whom I looked for no mercy: ſo I reſolved to begin with her; and, as ſoon as we were alone, I ſaid to her, "I doubt not you are preparing to make me ſuffer as much as you can from you: but I muſt tell you beforehand,

I am not very patient. I ſhall, on my part, give you all the mortifications that lie in my power. I muſt be plain with you, I have in my breaſt a paſſion which all your remonſtrance will never cure me of. So take your meaſures accordingly. Be as vigilant as you can, I muſt own I will do my utmoſt to be too hard for you." At theſe words the duenna altered her looks; and inſtead of a ſevere lecture, which I was in expectation of, ſhe ſaid with a ſmile, "I am charmed with your humour, and will be as frank as you; I find we were made for one another. Ah! fair lady, you know me ill, if you judge of me by what the doctor your ſpouſe ſaid of me, or by my auſtere aſpect. I am far from being an enemy to pleaſure. I never undertook to keep the glory of huſbands, but in order to do ſervice to their pretty wives. I have a long time learned to diſſemble, and can ſay that I am doubly happy, ſince I at once enjoy the convenience of vice, and the reputation of virtue. Between you and me the world are all virtuous at this rate only; it coſt too much to be entirely ſo. It is enough now a-days if one has the appearance of virtue. Let me be your guide," continued the governante. "We will make old Dr Oloroſo have as good an opinion of his wife and me, as the apothecary Signior Apuntador had of his and me. Poor Apuntador! how many tricks have we played him? His ſpouſe was a lovely creature, ſo good natured, reſt the ſoul of her, I will vouch for her, ſhe ſpent her youth

youth finely. She had I do not know how many lovers whom I introduced into her houſe, without her huſband's perceiving any thing of the matter. Therefore, pray, Madam, make a more favourable judgment of me, and be perſuaded, that, whatever talent the old uſher had, you will loſe nothing by the change. Perhaps I may be more ſerviceable to you than he was."

"I leave you to imagine, Diego, whether I was pleaſed or no with the duenna's diſcovering herſelf to me ſo frankly. I thought her the moſt ſevere of women: but one knows not what to judge of our ſex. Her ſincerity made me put confidence in her. I embraced her with ſuch tranſport, that ſhe found I was overjoyed to have ſo complaiſant a governante. I opened myſelf freely to her, and entreated her to contrive ſome way or other that we might have a private meeting; and ſhe has done it. She it was that employed the old woman who ſpoke to you this morning, and who was often an agent of hers and the opothecary's wife: but what is the beſt of all in this adventure," continued Margellina ſmiling, "is, that Melancia, upon my telling her what a ſound ſleeper my huſband is, is this very moment abed with him, and ſupplying my place." "So much the worſe, Madam," ſaid I; "I do not like the contrivance. Your huſband may wake, and find out the deceit." "He will not perceive it," replied ſhe haſtily: Do not be in pain about that, nor let a groundleſs fear diſturb the pleaſure you ought

ought to take in being with a young lady who wiſhes you ſo well." The doctor's wife obſerving that I could not help being afraid ſtill, left nothing undone ſhe could think of to put courage into me; and ſhe tried ſo many ways, that at laſt love got the better of my fear, and I was ready to take hold of that opportunity; when all of a ſudden, in the height of my joy and paſſion, we heard a terrible knocking at the door; which put the blind god to flight, with all his train of ſmiles and ſports. Margellina immediately hid me under a table in the hall. She put out the light; and, as had been agreed between her and her governante, in caſe ſuch an accident happened, went ſtraight to the door of her huſband's chamber. In the mean time the knocking continued; the whole houſe rung with it. The doctor got up, and putting on his morning-gown, called Melancia. The duenna jumped out of bed, though the doctor, who thought it had been his wife, bade her lie ſtill. Melancia ran to her miſtreſs, who ſtaid for her at the door; and the governante making as if ſhe had met her coming out of the chamber, cried, "Pray, Madam, go to bed again, I will ſee who it is." Margellina undreſſed herſelf as faſt as ſhe could, and laid herſelf down by the doctor, who had not the leaſt ſuſpicion that he was impoſed on. It was true, this ſcene was played in the dark by two actreſſes; one of them was an incomparable one, and the other had a great diſpoſition to become ſo.

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The duenna going to the gate with a light in her hand, opened it, and returned ſoon after to the doctor, ſaying, "Be pleaſed to riſe, Sir; our neighbour Fernandez de Buendia the bookſeller is fallen into an apoplectic fit. You are ſent for, and deſired to make what haſte you can." The doctor put on his cloaths as faſt as he could, and ran away to the bookſeller's. His wife, attended by the duenna, came in her morning-gown to the hall, and drew me out from under the table more dead than alive. "Fear nothing, Diego," ſays Margellina: "Be of good courage." She then told me in a few words all that had paſſed; and would fain have renewed the converſation which the incident had broken off: but the governante would not let her. "Madam," ſaid ſhe, "your huſband may come back in a moment; the bookſeller may be dead. Beſides," added ſhe, ſeeing the fright I was in, "what can you make of this poor creature? He is not in a condition to come off as he ſhould do. You had better ſend him home now, and let him come again to-morrow." Donna Margellina conſented to do ſo, but with reluctance. She was always for the time preſent; and I believe ſhe grieved heartily that ſhe could not give her huſband the new bonnet with which ſhe deſigned to cap him. For my part, I was not ſo afflicted for the loſs of love's dear favours, as I rejoiced for having eſcaped the danger I was in. I returned to my maſter's, and ſpent the reſt of the night in thinking on my adventure I was in ſuſpenſe

whether I ſhould go again the next night. I was afraid ſtill of ſome new diſgrace; but the devil, who always puts one forward on the like occaſions, repreſented to me, that I ſhould be a blockhead now not to puſh my fortune. He filled my heart with ideas of Margellina's charms, and the joys that were promiſed me in the poſſeſſion of them. This determined me to make another attempt; and I reſolved to do it with a better heart than I had done before. In this good diſpoſition I went to Margellina's door the night following, about eleven o' clock; it was very dark, not a ſtar to be ſeen. I mewed twice or thrice, to give notice of my being there; and no body coming to me, I not only mewed again, but counterfeited all the different cries of a cat, which I learned of a ſhepherd at Olmedo. I performed my part ſo well, that a neighbour coming home, and taking me for one of thoſe animals, took up a ſtone, and threw it at me with all his force, crying, "Curſe on your ſqualling." The ſtone hit me on the head, and ſtunned me with the blow. I found I was wounded; and that was enough to cure me of my gallantry. I loſt my love with my blood, went home, and waked all the houſe. My maſter dreſſed my wound, which he took to be dangerous. However, it healed in three weeks time. I have not ſince heard of Margellina; and ſuppoſe Dame Melancia diſengaged her from me, to provide her with a lover more for the duenna's intereſt. I do not much trouble myſelf about

about it; and ſoon after departed from Madrid, to continue the tour of Spain, which I intended to make.

CHAP. VIII.

How Gil Blas and his companion met a man ſoaking cruſts of bread in a fountain; and the diſcourſe they had together.

SIgnior Diego de la Fuente told me other adventures of his; but they are not worth repeating. I was however obliged to hear them, though they were all very long. He led us to Ponte de Duera; and we ſtaid in that village the reſt of the day, and ſupped on peaſe ſoup and a hare; the latter was not very young nor very freſh. As ſoon as it was light the next day we ſet out, having ſtored ourſelves with pretty good wine and bread, taking with us alſo half of the hare which we left over-night.

When we had travelled ſix miles, our ſtomachs began to come; and obſerving there was a juſt of trees about an hundred yards off the high road, we went thither to ſit down under the ſhade. We met there a man of eight and twenty years of age, who was ſoaking ſome cruſts of bread in a fountain. He had by him a long rapier, and a knapſack, which he carried at his back. We ſaluted him civilly, and he did the ſame by us. He then offered us ſome of his cruſts, demanding with a ſmile, "Whether we would do as he did?" We ſaid with all our hearts, on condition he would permit us to join our fare with his, and

accept of part of it. He agreed to it, and we produced what we had, and the ſtranger was very well pleaſed with it. "So, Gentlemen," cries he, "I perceive you are well provided: you are men of good forecaſt. I have not the precaution that you have. I truſt to chance: nevertheleſs, as it is with me, I muſt tell you without vanity, that I ſometimes make a ſhining figure. I am often treated like a prince, and have guards attending me." "I underſtand you," ſays Diego; "you would let us know that you are a player." "You gueſs right," replied the other; "I have been a player ever ſince I was fifteen years old. I could act ſeveral parts when I was a child." "I muſt be plain with you," cried the barber, ſhaking his head, "I can hardly believe you; I know the players too well for it. Thoſe gentlemen don't uſe to travel like you on foot, nor feed on bread and water. I am afraid you rather ſnuff the candles." "Think of me what you pleaſe," replied the actor, "I have acted ſeveral top parts, eſpecially love ones." "If that is true," ſays my comrade, "I felicitate you upon it; and Signior Gil Blas and myſelf rejoice that we have the honour to breakfaſt with a perſon of ſo great importance." Saying this, we fell to, all three of us, and ſoon picked the bones of the remains of the hare. We emptied our flaſk with ſo much diſpatch that we had not time to ſpeak; but after we had done eating and drinking, we renewed the converſation. "I am ſurpriſed," ſaid the barber to the player,

er, " that matters are no better with you. Your appearance is much too mean for a hero of the ſtage. Pardon me, if I ſpeak ſo freely to you." " So freely!" cried the actor, " don't you know Melchior Zapata? I thank my ſtars I am not teſty. I love that every body ſhould be free with me, as I am with every body. I confeſs I am not rich; you ſee my coat here ſhews my profeſſion, and ſo will all the reſt of my wardrobe. He then opened his knapſack, and pulled out ſome tinſel ornaments, a dirty plume of feathers, and ſome red buſkins. " This is my equipage, Gentlemen," continued he: " and in truth it is not ſo good as a man could wiſh for." " I wonder at it," replied Diego, " ſure you have no wife nor daughter." " Yes, I have a young wife, and a handſome one," replied Zapata: " but my damned luck would have it, that ſhe muſt prove virtuous, forſooth. I married her in hopes ſhe would not let me ſtarve; but ſuch is my ill fate, that ſhe ſtands upon her reputation. It is very hard that among all the ſtrollers there ſhould be but one honeſt woman, and ſhe ſhould fall to my ſhare." " It is indeed very hard," ſays the barber. " Why did you not marry one of the company at Madrid? You could not have failed there." " That is right," replied the actor; " but we ſtrollers muſt not pretend to ſuch heroines as town-actreſſes. An actor of the king's own company can aſpire to no more than that. If one would take a wife in the city, one might be furniſhed as well out of the

playhouſe as in it." "Did you never try," ſays my companion, "to get into the king's company? Muſt a man have infinite merit to be admitted amongſt them?" "Infinite merit!" replied Melchior; "there are twenty of them, inquire into their characters, you will find above half of them are fit for nothing but to hug a brown muſket; yet, for all that, it is no eaſy matter to get to be one of them. It muſt be done either by money or friends, and then whatever a man's merit is, he ſhall be admitted. I ought to know it; for I have been hooted and hiſſed like a devil, though I deſerved to be clapped for my performances. I tore my lungs, and imitated the moſt popular actors of the ſtage: but nothing would do. The town would not bear in me, what they clapped in others; ſuch is the power of prejudice. Thus finding I did not take; and having nothing to make my way for me, in ſpite of thoſe that hiſſed me, I am returning to Zamora to my wife and my companions, who have not met with very good luck there neither. I wiſh we may not be obliged to beg our way to the next town. If we do, it will not be the firſt time." Saying this, the ſtage-emperor roſe up, threw his knapſack over his ſhoulder, put on his ſword, and with a grave air, cried, "May the Heavens, Gentlemen, ſhower their favours upon your heads." Diego replied in the ſame tone, "May you find your wife at Zamora another woman, and in a better temper to keep you from ſtarving." As ſoon as Signior Zapata had turned his

his back upon us, he fell to his declamations and geſticulations. The barber and I hiſſed him, to teach him more diſcretion. He thought he heard ſtill the hiſſes at Madrid, looked back; and finding it was we only, who made ourſelves merry at his expenſe, inſtead of being offended at it, he took it in good part, and went away laughing aloud, as little reaſon as he had for it. We alſo returned to the high road, and proceeded on our journey.

CHAP. IX.

In what condition Diego found his family; and how merry Gil Blas and he made themſelves before they ſeparated.

WE lay the next night in a little village, whoſe name I have forgot, between Moyadas and Valpueſta, and came the next day about eleven o'clock to the plain of Olmedo. "Signior Gil Blas," ſays my companion, "this is the place where I was born, and I am tranſported at the ſight of it;" ſo natural it is for men to love their country. "Signior Diego," anſwered I, "a man who loves his country ſo well as you ſeem to do, ſhould methinks not have talked ſo freely of of it as you have done. Olmedo appears to me to be a city, and you repreſented it only as a village. It muſt be a great town, if it is not a city." "I beg Olmedo's pardon," replied the barber; "but I muſt tell you, that after

after having ſeen Madrid, Toledo, Saragoſſa, and other great cities, which I have done in my travels in Spain, I look upon little ones as villages." As we drew nearer to Olmedo, we perceived a great number of people were gathered together; and when we came up to them, found three tents ſet up at a diſtance from each other, in which were cooks and butlers making ready for a feaſt. Some were preparing boiled meat and roaſt meat; others pyes and fricaſſees; others filling bottles; others waſhing glaſſes. What I took moſt particular notice of, was a great ſtage built in the middle of the place, adorned with painted paper, on which were ſeveral mottoes in Greek and Latin. The barber no ſooner ſpied the inſcriptions, than he crid, "The Greek there ſmells very much of my uncle Thomas. I will lay a wager it is his doing: for, between you and me, he is a perſon of great ability. He can ſay an infinite number of college-books by heart. The worſt of it is, he is ever repeating them in all companies, which every one is not pleaſed with. My uncle has more than this, tranſlated the Latin poets, and Greek authors. He is maſter of antiquity, as may be ſeen by the fine remarks he has made. If it had not been for him, we ſhould not have known that in the city of Athens children cried when they were whipped. We owe that diſcovery to his profound erudition.

When my comrade and I had made our obſervations on what we had ſeen, we were curious to know for what were ſuch preparations.

tions. We were about inquiring, when Diego ſpied his uncle, Signior Thomas de la Fuente, who it ſeems had the ordering of the feaſt. We ran up to him; but the ſchoolmaſter did not at firſt know his nephew Diego, ſo much was he altered in ten years time. But finding at laſt it was the ſame, he embraced him very affectionately, and cried, "Ah, my dear nephew! art thou come once more to the place of thy nativity? Wilt thou again reviſit thy houſehold gods? And art thou reſtored ſafe and ſound to thy family? Oh, thrice and four times happy day! a day worthy a place among the red-lettered in the calendar. I have abundance of news, friend, to tell thee. Thy uncle Pedro, the wit, is become the victim of Pluto. He died three months ago. The miſer in his lifetime was ever afraid that he ſhould want neceſſaries. He had great penſions from ſeveral grandees, and yet he ſpent but ten piſtoles a-year for his maintenance. He had a valet, but he ſtarved him as well as himſelf. He was more mad than the Greek Ariſtippus, who ordered his ſlaves to throw away his riches in the deſert of Libya, as things that were incumbrances. Thy uncle was continually heaping up gold and ſilver. For whom? For heirs he would never look upon. He died worth thirty thouſand ducats, which thy father, thy uncle Bertrand, and I have divided among us. We can now provide for our children. My brother Nicolas has already diſpoſed of thy ſiſter Thereſa. She is newly married to one of our alcaldes.

alcaldes. *Connubio junxit ſtabili, propriamque dicavit.* It is for her wedding that this feſtival is going to be kept. It is we that have ſet up theſe tents here for the three heirs of Pedro; each of us has one, and each pays the expenſe of a day. I wiſh thou hadſt come ſooner, to have ſeen the beginning of our rejoicings. The day before yeſterday, which was that of the wedding, thy father was at the expenſe: he gave a noble entertainment, and the company ran at the ring afterwards. Yeſterday the mercer bore the charge, and diverted us with a paſtoral comedy. He dreſſed up ten handſome boys and girls like ſhepherds and ſhepherdeſſes. He uſed all the points and ribands in his ſhop to equip them. They danced and ſung moſt part of the day: but though they performed their parts very dexterouſly, yet the people were not very much taken with it. I find paſtorals are out of doors.

This day's expenſe is to be mine; and I have provided a ſhow of my own invention, to entertain the townſmen of Olmedo. *Finis coronat opus.* I have cauſed a ſtage to be raiſed, upon which, God willing, my diſciples ſhall repreſent a piece compoſed by myſelf, entitled, *The Amuſements of Muley Bugentuf King of Morocco.* It will be extremely well played; for my ſcholars pronounce as well as the actors of Madrid. They are youths of Pennafiel and Segovia, who board at my houſe. Excellent actors! Indeed I have taken ſome pains with them: what they ſay, will be done maſterly, *ut ita dicam.* As to the piece itſelf, I ſhall ſay nothing.

nothing. I will have the pleaſure of the ſurpriſe. All I ſhall obſerve to thee on that head, is, that it will tranſport the ſpectators. It is one of thoſe tragical ſubjects that move the ſoul by images of death: for I am of the ſame opinion with Ariſtotle, that poets ſhould excite terrour. Well if I had wrote for the ſtage, I would have brought nothing on it but bloody princes and murdering heroes. I would have bathed myſelf in blood. I would not only have killed the principal perſons in my plays, but even the guards themſelves. I would have cut the throat of the candle-ſnuffer. In fine, I love the *Terrible*. It is my *gout*. Thoſe kinds of poems always take. They bring many to the houſe, and get the authors fame."

While he was ſpeaking, we ſpied a great croud of people coming out of the town. They were the new-married couple, attended by their relations and friends. Twelve fiddlers went before, and made a horrid noiſe with their diſcord. We met them; and Diego diſcovered himſelf to the company, who ſhouted for joy. Every body was eager to accoſt him. He had ſomething to do to receive all their civilities in a civil manner. All his relations and all that were preſent embraced him. After which his father ſaid, "Thou art welcome, Diego; thou findeſt thy parents ſomewhat better in the world than when thou leftſt them. I ſhall explain myſelf farther another time." Then the company proceeded into the plain, entered the tents, and ſat down at the

the tables which were prepared for them. I did not leave my companion. We both dined with the bridegroom and bride, who ſeemed to be well-matched. Dinner held a long while, becauſe the ſchoolmaſter had the vanity to order three courſes to be ſerved up, that he might outdo his brethren, who had not come off ſo magnificently. After dinner all the gueſts expreſſed a great impatience to ſee Signior Thomas's piece repreſented, not doubting, ſaid they, but the production of ſo fine a genius muſt be well worth hearing. We drew near the theatre, where all the fiddlers ſat in a readineſs to play between the acts. Every one was ſilent in expectation of the opening the play. At laſt the actors appeared on the ſtage; as did alſo the author, with the poem in his hand. He had reaſon to ſay the piece was tragical; for in the firſt act the King of Morocco, by way of recreation, kills a hundred Mooriſh ſlaves, ſhooting at them with his bow and arrows. In the ſecond he cuts off the heads of thirty Portugueſe officers, whom one of his captains had made priſoners of war. And in the third, this monarch, weary of his wives, ſets fire to the palace wherein they were lodged, and reduced both it and them to aſhes. The Mooriſh ſlaves and the Portugueſe officers were figures made of reed very artfully; and the palace was compoſed of paper, which, when it was ſet a-fire, there were a thouſand doleful cries that ſeemed to iſſue from amidſt the flames. This finiſhed the piece: and all the field rang with

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the applauſes which ſo fine a tragedy met with. This juſtified the good taſte of the poet; and ſhewed that he knew how to make a good choice of his ſubjects.

I thought there was nothing more to be ſeen, if the *Amuſements of Muley Bugentuf* were over; but I was miſtaken. There were prizes to be diſtributed. For Thomas, to render the entertainment the more ſolemn, had cauſed ſome of his ſcholars to make exerciſes, which they were to read to the auditory that had heard the play; and thoſe that did beſt were to have books given them, which he had purchaſed with his own money at Segovia.

Two benches were therefore brought on the ſtage, and a caſe of books very neatly bound. All that were to perform came up to Signior Thomas, who ſtood as ſtiffly as the preſident of a college. He had a paper in his hand, wherein was written the names of thoſe that were to carry off the prizes. He gave the firſt to the King of Morocco, who read his part with a loud voice. Each ſcholar, as he was named, went reſpectfully to receive a book of the pedant. He then was crowned with laurel, and made to ſit down on one of the two benches, expoſed to the view of the admiring ſpectators. As deſirous as the ſchoolmaſter was to ſend away all the company contented, he could not accompliſh it. For having diſtributed all the prizes among certain youths whoſe parents paid him beſt, the mothers of ſome of the neglected ſcholars took fire, and accuſed the pedant of

partiality. Thus this feaſt, which had till then done him ſo much honour, was like to end like that of the Lapithæ.

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

Of Gil Blas's arrival at Madrid, and the firſt maſter he ſerved in that city.

I Staid ſome time with the young barber; and hearing there was a merchant in Olmedo, who was going to Segovia from Valladolid with four light mules, I got into his acquaintance, and rode one of them to Segovia, where he invited me to his houſe, and kept me there two days, ſo far was I got into his good graces. When he found I was about to depart for Madrid by the muleteer, he gave me a letter in charge, deſiring me to deliver it with my own hand, as it was directed. I took it, not knowing it was a letter of recommendation. However, I carried it to Signior Mattheo Melendez a linendraper at Madrid; who had no ſooner read the contents of it, but he ſaid very obligingly to me, "Signior Gil Blas, Pedro Palatio my correſpondent writes to me in your favour ſo preſſingly, that I muſt beg of you to take a lodging at my houſe. He has alſo deſired me to help you to a good place, which I ſhall with pleaſure endeavour to do, not doubting of ſucceeding in it to your content."

I accepted of Melendez's offer with the more joy, for that my finances grew daily leſs and leſs. I was not however a burthen to him long. When I had been with him eight days, he told me he had juſt been recommending me to a gentleman of his acquaintance, who wanted a valet de chambre, and he believed he would take me. The gentleman came himſelf ſoon after. "Signior," ſays Melendez, pointing to me, "you ſee there the young man I ſpoke to you about. He is a ſober lad, and I will anſwer for his honeſty." The gentleman looked fixedly upon me, and ſaid my phyſiognomy pleaſed him, and that he would hire me for his ſervant. "Come along with me," continued he, "I will ſhew you what you muſt do." So bidding the merchant good-morrow, he led me to the broad ſtreet near St Philip's church. We went into a pretty good houſe, of which he took up one wing. We mounted a ſtair-caſe of ſix ſteps, and came to a room which had two doors, one within another; the firſt had a little lattice window. Through that room we paſſed into another, where was a bed and other furniture, rather neat than rich.

As my new maſter had made his obſervations of me at Melendez's, ſo did I alſo in my turn examine him with a great deal of attention. He was above fifty years old; had a grave, reſerved look, but withal there was good nature in it; and his temper anſwered his aſpect. He aſked me ſeveral queſtions about my family. And my account of myſelf

giving him ſatisfaction; "Gil Blas," ſays he, "I take thee to be a ſenſible youth, and am glad I have met with thee: thou ſhalt thyſelf have no reaſon to be ſorry. I will allow thee ſix reals a-day for thy wages and board, beſide the vales thou wilt have in my ſervice. It is no hard matter to pleaſe me. I do not eat at home. All thou wilt have to do, is, to bruſh my cloaths in the morning, to dreſs me, and the reſt of the day is thy own; only take care to be at home early in the evening, and ſtay for me at my door. I require no more of thee." Having thus told me my buſineſs, he took ſix reals out of his pocket, and gave me for the uſe before mentioned; after which we went out of the houſe again. He locked the doors, and took the keys with him. "Friend," ſaid he, "do not follow me. Go whither thou wilt; but let me find thee on the ſtairs when I come home at night." Saying this, he left me to ſpend the reſt of the day as I thought fit.

"Thou haſt got a rare maſter, Gil Blas," ſaid I to myſelf. "Six reals a-day for bruſhing his cloaths, and dreſſing him a-mornings, the reſt of thy time all thy own! This is the eaſieſt place ſure that ever man had. No wonder I was ſo deſirous to ſee Madrid. My good genius put me upon it. I cannot be happier in my circumſtances." I walked up and down the city all day, looking upon every thing that was new to me, and that was not a little. In the evening I ſupped at an eating-houſe in our neighbourhood; and then went to the

place

place where my maſter ordered me to wait for him. He came three quarters of an hour after me, and ſeemed well pleaſed to find me ſo punctual. "It is very well," ſays he; "I love that ſervants ſhould be exact to a minute." At theſe words he opened the doors of his apartment, and afterwards locked them upon us. It being dark, he took a tinderbox, ſtruck a light, and lighted a candle. I then helped to undreſs him. When he was abed, I put a candle in his chimney, as he bade me, and took the other with me into the antechamber, where I lay in a bed without curtains. He roſe the next day between nine and ten. I bruſhed his cloaths. He gave me ſix reals, and diſmiſſed me till night. When he went out, I obſerved that he took great care to faſten his doors. We ſaw one another no more till night; ſuch was our way of living, which I thought was very pleaſant. But the pleaſanteſt of it all was, that I did not know my maſter's name. Melendez knew it not himſelf, he having no more knowledge of him, than that he uſed to come to his ſhop, and buy linen of him. Our neighbours could not ſatisfy my curioſity any better. They all told me my maſter was a ſtranger to them, though he had lived in thoſe lodgings two years; that he kept company with nobody thereabouts: and ſome of them, who were apt to judge too raſhly, concluded thence, that he was not ſo good as he ſhould be. They went farther afterwards, and ſuſpecting him to be a ſpy for the king of Portu-

gal; bidding me take care of myſelf. I was mightily troubled at what they ſaid, for fear, if it ſhould happen to be true, I might perhaps viſit ſome of the dungeons in Madrid. As innocent as I was, I could not help being afraid. My paſt misfortunes rendered the magiſtracy terrible to me. I had twice had experience, that if it did not murder the innocent, it had at leaſt no regard to the laws of hoſpitality; and that it was always a ſad thing to fall into its hands. I conſulted Melendez on ſo nice an occaſion. He could not tell what to adviſe me. Though he did not think my maſter was a ſpy, yet he knew not what elſe to make of him. I reſolved to obſerve him, and to leave him, if I found him an enemy to the ſtate. But I thought to myſelf, I lived ſo eaſily, that I ought to be very ſure of it. To this end I examined ſtrictly all his actions; and to ſift him, ſaid one night, as I was undreſſing him, "I know not, Sir, how a man can live ſo as to avoid evil tongues. It is a vile world; and ſome of our neighbours are as bad as any in it; they deal altogether in ſcandal. You cannot imagine how they talk of you." "Well, Gil Blas," replied he, "and what can they ſay of me?" "Malice," anſwered I, "never wants matter. Virtue itſelf is often turned to its purpoſe. Our neighbours ſay we are dangerous people; that the court ought to have an eye upon us. In a word, you paſs, Sir, for the king of Portugal's ſpy." Saying this, I looked on my maſter as Alexander did on his phyſician,

ſician, and made uſe of all my penetration to ſee whether I could diſcover any thing. I fancied I perceived ſome alteration in my patron, which agreed well enough with the conjectures of our neighbours. He appeared very penſive; but preſently recovering himſelf, he ſaid, with a great deal of compoſure, "Gil Blas, do not mind what our neighbours ſay; it is not worth our troubling ourſelves about it. Let them think as ill as they pleaſe of us, as long as we give them no occaſion for it."

He ſaid no more, but went to bed; and I did the ſame, not knowing what judgment to make of him. The next day, as we were preparing to go out, we heard a great knocking at the door. My maſter opened the innermoſt, and looking through the lattice, he ſaw a man well dreſſed, who accoſted him thus, "Signior, I am the alguazil, and am come to tell you that Monſieur the corregidor deſires to ſpeak with you." "What would he have with me?" replied my patron. The alguazil anſwered, "I do not know that; you will ſoon be informed of it." "I am his humble ſervant," replied my maſter; "I have no buſineſs with him." Saying this, he clapped the door upon him very haſtily, as if he did not much like what the alguazil ſaid. He gave me my ſix reals, bidding me go, he would ſtay within that morning, and had no further occaſion of me. This made me judge that he was afraid of being apprehended, and to avoid it, kept at home. I left him; and

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to ſatisfy myſelf in the matter, hid in a place where I could ſee him when he went out. I was reſolved not to ſtir till I ſaw what would come of it; and about an hour after I obſerved him to come out with an air of aſſurance, which confounded my ſuſpicions, but did not cure me of them; for I had no very good opinion of him. I imagined that his looks were artificial; that he ſtaid behind to carry off his gold and jewels, and perhaps was going to ſave himſelf by ſudden flight. I deſpaired of ſeeing him again, and was in doubt whether I ſhould wait for him at night; but I altered my mind, and went to my poſt at the uſual hour. I was very much ſurpriſed to ſee him return. He went to bed without ſhewing the leaſt concern, and roſe the next day with the ſame compoſure of mind.

While he was dreſſing himſelf, we heard a knocking at our door, as it was the day before. My maſter looked through the lattice. He perceived the alguazil was there again, and demanded what he would have? "Open the door," replied the alguazil; "it is Monſieur the corregidor." At ſo awful a name my blood chilled in my veins. I was deviliſhly afraid of thoſe gentlemen ever ſince I had fallen into their hands, and would gladly have been a hundred leagues off Madrid. As for my patron, he was not ſo frighted. He opened the door, and received the judge with reſpect. "You ſee," ſays the corregidor, "I am not come with a train after me. I would do what is to be done without

out making a noiſe. As ill a character as you have in this city, I think there is ſo much due to you, as you appear like a gentleman. Pray what is your name, Sir? and what buſineſs brought you to Madrid?" "My Lord," replied my maſter, "I am a native of New Caſtile, and my name is *Don Bernard de Caſtel Blazo*. As to my buſineſs here, I walk about to ſee plays, and divert myſelf daily with ſome pleaſant companions." "You have doubtleſs," ſays the judge, "a great income." "No, my Lord," anſwered my patron, "I have no income at all, nor lands, nor houſes." "How do you live then?" replied the corregidor. "I will ſhew you," ſays my maſter. At theſe words he lifted up the hangings, opened a door that I had not obſerved before, and after that another within it, which led to a cloſet, where was a great cheſt full of pieces of gold. He deſired the judge to ſatisfy himſelf, and went on in this manner.

"You know, my Lord, that the Spaniards do not love labour: and of all the Spaniards in the world, I believe I love it leaſt. I am ſo lazy, that I cannot bear any employment. If I would turn my vices into virtues, I might call that lazineſs a philoſophical indolence: that it was the effect of a mind taken off from the things which are moſt deſired by men. But I muſt own that I am lazy by my complexion, and ſo lazy, that if I were to work for my living, I ſhould ſtarve. That I might live according to my humour, and ſave the

the trouble of a ſteward, I turned all my eſtate, which conſiſted of ſeveral conſiderable inheritances, into money. That money is in this cheſt, above fifty thouſand ducats; which is more than I ſhall want, if I live to an hundred years old, being now near threeſcore. And I ſpend but a thouſand a-year. I am not ſolicitous for the future, becauſe, thank my ſtars, I am nowiſe addicted to the three things that commonly ruin men. I do not love feaſting nor gaming, and have done with women. I am not one of thoſe old coxcombs that dote on the ſex when the ſeaſon is paſt, and ſhall never be at any charge to purchaſe their favours."

"You are a happy man," ſays the corregidor. "They injured you who took you to be a ſpy. A man of your temper is by no means fit for it. Live on in your way, Don Bernard," added he; "inſtead of giving you any diſturbance, I will hereafter be your defender, and deſire your friendſhip, and I offer you mine." "My Lord," cried my maſter, "I accept with joy and reſpect ſo obliging an offer. By giving me your friendſhip, you add to my wealth, and make my happineſs complete." The alguazil and I heard this converſation in the next room. Don Bernard could hardly tell how to return the extraordinary civilities of the corregidor: and my maſter's example put me upon exerting myſelf to do honour to the alguazil. I made him a hundred low bows; though, at the bottom, I had that contempt and averſion for him, which

which every honeſt man has naturally for an alguazil.

CHAP. II.

The ſurpriſe Gil Blas was in to meet Captain Rolando at Madrid: and ſeveral curious things related to him by that robber.

DON Bernard de Caſtel Blazo having waited upon the corregidor to the ſtreet, returned immediately to ſee that his cheſt was faſt, and his doors well locked. We then went out both of us much better ſatisfied than we were before, Don Bernard having the corregidor to his friend, and I being ſecure of my ſix reals a-day. I reſolved to go and tell this adventure to Melendez; and as I drew near his houſe, I ſpied Captain Rolando. I was in a dreadful ſurpriſe, and could not help trembling at ſight of him. He knew me again, came up to me very gravely, and keeping ſtill his air of ſuperiority, ordered me to follow him. I ſhook all the while, and obeyed him in my fright. "He will pay me my old reckoning," ſaid I to myſelf: "whither will he carry me? perhaps there is ſome ſubterranean habitation in this city alſo. 'Egad, if I thought ſo, I would let him ſee that I have not the gout in my toes." I walked behind him, obſerving narrowly at what place he ſtopped, reſolving to run for it, if I did not like it.

Rolando rid me of my fears, by entering a famous tavern. I followed him. He called for

for the beſt wine, and bid the landlord get dinner. While dinner was preparing, Captain Rolando began his diſcourſe to me, thus: "Thou mayſt well wonder, Gil Blas, to ſee thy old commander here; and thy wonder will be increaſed, when thou heareſt what I am going to tell thee. The day I left thee in our ſubterranean dwelling, while I and my companions went to Manſilla, to ſell the mules and the horſes we took the day before, we met the corregidor of Leon's ſon in his coach, attended by four men on horſeback, well armed. We killed two of them, and the other two fled. The coachman, afraid of his maſter's life, cried, "Ah, Signiors, for God's ſake don't murder the only ſon of the corregidor of Leon." Theſe words, inſtead of gaining the pity of my cavaliers, enraged them againſt the ſon of the corregidor. "Don't let the ſon of a mortal enemy of our fellows eſcape us," ſaid one of my companions. "How many of our profeſſion has he ſlaughtered? Let us be revenged, and offer this victim to their manes." The reſt of my cavaliers approved of his ſpeech; and my lieutenant was preparing to act the part of the high prieſt in this ſacrifice; when I held him by the arm, and cried, "Hold, why will you ſpill blood without neceſſity? Let us be content with this young man's purſe, ſince he does not reſiſt. It would be barbarous to cut his throat. Beſides, he is not accountable for his father's actions; and his father does but his duty when he condemns us to death, as we do ours,

ours, when we eaſe travellers of their burdens."

I interceded thus for the corregidor's ſon; and my interceſſion was not ineffectual: we only took all the money he had, and carried off with us the horſes of the two dead men, which we ſold, with the reſt, at Manſilla. We returned afterwards to our ſubterranean habitation, where we arrived next day a little before light. We were very much ſurpriſed to find the trap-door lifted up; and that ſurpriſe of ours was ſtill greater, when we found Leonarda tied to a table. She told us what had paſſed, in two words. We admired how thou couldſt deceive us. We did not think thee capable of playing us ſuch a trick; and we forgave thee, for the contrivance. As for us, as ſoon as we had untied our cook, I ordered her to get us ſomething good for to eat; and took my comrades with me to ſee our horſes well looked after. The old negro, who had had nothing given him in four and twenty hours, was almoſt in the agony. We would fain have ſaved him: but he was too far gone, and appeared ſo near his end, that we left the poor dog as we found him. We ourſelves went to breakfaſt; and having ſatisfied our craving appetites, ſlept away the reſt of that day. When we awoke, we heard from Leonarda that Domingo had breathed his laſt. So we carried him into the vault, where thou mayſt remember thou uſedſt to lie, and buried him as formally as if he had had the honour to have been one of our companions.

Four or five days after, as we were ſcouring

the road, we met three troops of St Hermandad's officers at the entrance of a wood. We ſpied no more than one troop at firſt, and deſpiſed them, though ſuperiour in number to us. We attacked them; and while we were engaged, the two other troops that had not yet come in play, bore down upon us ſo warmly, that our valour was of no uſe to us. Our lieutenant and two of our cavaliers were killed on this occaſion. Myſelf and two more, which were all our company, were ſurrounded and taken. Two of the troops of St Hermandad conducted us to Leon: The third went to deſtroy our retreat, which was found out in this manner. A peaſant of Luceno croſſing the foreſt in his way home, by chance perceived our trap-door lifted up, the ſame day thou carriedſt away the lady. He ſuſpected that it was our dwelling: and not having the courage to enter, he contented himſelf to obſerve the place, and make thoſe remarks by which he might find it again. He cut the bark off ſome of the neighbouring trees in ſeveral places, and notched others all the way from one ſpace to another, till he was out of the wood. He then went to Leon to give information of it to the corregidor, who was the more pleaſed with it, becauſe his ſon had been lately robbed by our company. He preſently got together thoſe three troops of St Hermandad's officers to apprehend us, and the peaſant was their guide.

I was a ſhow for the citizens of Leon, on my arrival in that city. Had I been a Portugueſe

tugueſe general, brought thither priſoner of war, the people could not have flocked about me more. "Behold the famous captain!" cried they, "the terrour of the country; he deſerves to be torn in pieces by horſes; and ſo do his companions." We were brought before the corregidor, who began to inſult me. "Heaven, tired out with the diſorders of thy life," ſays he, "has given ſuch a rogue at laſt into my hands. "My Lord," replied I, "if I have been guilty of crimes, you cannot at leaſt reproach me with the death of your ſon. I ſaved his life: you ſhould conſider me a little for that." "Sirrah," cried he, "it is not by ſuch raſcals as thou art, that men of honour are obliged to act generouſly. But if I had a mind to ſave thee, the duty of my office will not let me." Having ſaid this, he ordered us to be ſhut up in a dungeon, where my companions did not long languiſh; for at three days end they were taken out to act a tragical part in the market-place. As for me, I remained in the dungeon three weeks, imagining that my execution was deferred to render it the more terrible; and I expected a new ſort of death: but the corregidor then ſending for me, ſaid, "Hear thy ſentence. Thou art diſcharged. Had it not been for thee, my only ſon had been murdered on the highway. As I am his father, I cannot in gratitude forget that piece of ſervice: and as I am a judge, not having it in my power to pardon thee, I wrote to court in thy favour. I have procured a pardon for thee, and thou

mayſt go where thou pleaſeſt: but have a care how thou offendeſt again. Let this happy event inſtruct thee to leave off thy wicked courſe of life." What he ſaid made an impreſſion upon me, and I departed for Madrid, with a reſolution to follow his advice, and live peaceably in that city. I found my father and mother dead. Their eſtate was in the poſſeſſion of an old relation, who gave me ſuch a kind of account of it as truſtees generally do. I had no more than three thouſand ducats, which perhaps was not a fourth part of what belonged to me. But what ſhould I do in that caſe? I would have got nothing by a law-ſuit. So I took it, and to avoid idleneſs, bought an alguazil's place. My brethren would, out of decency, have oppoſed my admiſſion, had they known my hiſtory. But by good luck they either knew it not, or made as if they did not, which is all one. Indeed, in this honourable ſociety it behoves every body to hide his actions as well as he can. Heaven be praiſed, we have nothing to ſay againſt one another on that ſcore: the devil take the beſt. Nevertheleſs, friend," continues Rolando, "to ſpeak my whole mind to thee, I do not at all like my profeſſion. It requires too much tricking and cunning for me. Here one can only commit private and ſubtle rogueries. My firſt trade was more to my gout. My new one is ſafer, it is true; but the former is more pleaſant, and I love liberty. I am diſpoſed to ſell my place, and to take the mountains at the ſource of the Tagus.

gus. I know there is a retreat there inhabited by a band of Catalans, the braveſt fellows in the kingdom. If thou wilt go with me, we will add to the company. I ſhall be captain's ſecond; and that they may make no objection to thee, I will aſſure them that I ſaw thee fight twice by my ſide. I will wonderfully extol thy valour. I will praiſe thee more than a general does an officer whom he would have advanced. I will take no notice of the trick thou didſt put upon us, leſt they ſhould ſuſpect thee. They ſhall know nothing of that. Well, what ſayeſt thou? Wilt thou follow me? I wait for thy anſwer." "Every one has his particular inclinations," replied I: "you are made for hardy enterpriſes, and I for a quiet, eaſy life." "I underſtand you," ſaid he: "the lady you took from us, has ſtill the poſſeſſion of your heart, and no doubt you live an eaſy life with her at Madrid. Confeſs, Monſieur Gil Blas, that you have her with you here; and live together on the piſtoles you carried off from our under-ground dwelling." I told him he was in an errour; and while we were at dinner, related to him the ſtory of that lady, and all that had happend to me ſince I left the band. When we had dined, he revived his diſcourſe of the Catalans. He owned that he reſolved to join them, and again tempted me to go with him: but perceiving that I declined it, he gave me a ſtern look, and ſaid very gravely, "Since thy ſoul is ſo baſe as to prefer thy ſlaviſh con-

dtion to the honour of being admitted into a company of brave men, I abandon thee to the poverty of thy ſpirit. But hearken to what I ſay to thee, and keep it always in memory. Forget what thou haſt heard from me to-day. Mention me to nobody. If I hear thou doſt ſo much as name me in converſation—— Thou knoweſt me, and that is enough." At theſe words he called for the reckoning, paid it, and we went our way.

CHAP. III.

He is diſmiſſed the ſervice of Don Bernard de Caſtel Blazo, and enters into that of a beau.

AS we were going out of the tavern, and taking leave of one another, my maſter paſſed by. He ſaw me, and I obſerved that he more than once caſt his eye upon the captain. I imagined he was ſurpriſed to ſee me with ſuch a ſort of a man; for the very looks of him were enough to let one into his character. He was tall, hard-viſaged; and though he was not ugly, yet he had ſomething in his face that was ſhocking, and had the air of a rogue.

I was not out in my conjectures. I found at night that Don Bernard's head was full of the captain, and that he was well diſpoſed to believe every thing I knew of him, if I durſt tell him. "Gil Blas," ſays he, "what tall fellow was it that I met you with?" "An alguazil, Sir," replied I; thinking that would have been ſufficient to ſatisfy him. But

But he aſked me ſeveral other queſtions about him; and obſerving that I was in ſome confuſion, occaſioned by Rolando's threats, which were freſh in my memory, he ſaid no more, but went to bed. Next morning, when I had dreſſed him as uſual, he gave me ſix ducats inſtead of ſix reals, ſaying, "There, friend, I give thee that for this day's ſervice. Go, find out another maſter. I will not entertain a valet that has got ſuch an acquaintance." I anſwered in my juſtification, that I knew this alguazil, by having preſcribed him phyſic, when I practiſed it at Valladolid. "Very well," replied my maſter, "your excuſe is very fine; but you ſhould have made it laſt night. "I was cautious of doing it then," ſaid I, "for fear you ſhould have been offended at it; and that was the cauſe of my confuſion." "Yes, yes," replied my patron, "you were very cautious. I did not think you had been ſo cunning," continued he, clapping me gently on the ſhoulder, "Go, child, I diſmiſs you."

I went immediately to inform Melendez of this bad news. He heard me out, and ſaid, "Don't trouble thyſelf; I will help thee to a better place." And accordingly a few days after he informed me that he had got the beſt maſter in Madrid for me. "Gil Blas," cried he, "thou little thinkeſt thou art going to be ſo happy as I ſhall make thee. I have recommended thee to Don Matthias de Silva, a man of the firſt quality, one of thoſe young lords who go under the denomination of

beaux.

beaux. I have the honour to be his draper and mercer. He buys ſilks and linen of me upon tick, it is true; but we ſeldom loſe by theſe gentlemen in the end. They marry rich heireſſes or widows, who pay their debts for them; and if they do not, we charge their goods at ſuch rates, that if we have one part in four, we come off pretty well. Don Matthias's ſteward is my particular friend. We will go to him: he will preſent you to his maſter; and you may depend upon it, he will uſe you well, upon my account."

As we were going to Don Matthias's palace, the draper ſaid to me, "Methinks it is very neceſſary that you ſhould know the character of the ſteward. His name is *Gregorio Rodriguez*. He was not worth a groat, between you and me, when he firſt came into buſineſs; but finding he had a genius for it, he purſued it, and has got a good eſtate out of two round families, in which he ſerved as ſteward. I muſt tell you he is very vain, and will have the other domeſtics cringe to him. They muſt all apply themſelves to him, if they want any favour of their maſter. For if they ſhould obtain it without his participation, he will always contrive ſome way or other to hinder its taking effect. Do you govern yourſelf, Gil Blas, by this rule therefore, and never fail to make your court to him, even more than to his maſter. Try all ways of getting into his good graces. His friendſhip will be of great uſe to you. He will pay you your wages punctually, and do ſomething more for you.

you. If you pleaſe him, he may now and then give you a little bone to pick, while himſelf ſecures the great ones. He does what he will. Don Matthias minds nothing but his pleaſures, he never looks into his affairs. Is not that a rare houſe for a ſteward?"

When we came to the palace, we aſked for Signior Rodriguez, and were told we ſhould find him in his apartment. He was there, and with him a kind of peaſant, with a blue bag full of piſtoles. The ſteward, who appeared to be of a more ſallow complexion than a girl worn out with celibacy, met Melendez with open arms. The draper opened his in like manner, and they embraced both with demonſtrations of friendſhip, in which there was at leaſt as much art as nature. Their ſalutations over, they talked of me. Rodriguez having examined me from head to foot, ſaid very civilly, I was exactly ſuch a one as Don Matthias wanted, and that he would gladly undertake to preſent me to him. Upon this, Melendez let him know what a kindneſs he had for me; praying the ſteward to take me into his protection. After which he left us together: and as ſoon as he was gone, ſays Rodriguez, "I will introduce you to my maſter, when I have diſpatched this countryman;" of whom he took the blue bag, ſaying, "Let us ſee, Talego, whether the money be right." He told out 500 piſtoles, and cried, "It is very well, the ſum is exact." Upon which he gave the countryman an acquittance, and ſent him away. The piſtoles he put into the

the bag again. Then addreſſing himſelf to me, ſaid, "Now we will go to my maſter's levee. He generally riſes about noon. It is an hour paſt, and I ſuppoſe he is got up." As the ſteward ſaid, we found him in his morning-gown, lolling in an elbow-chair, his leg over one arm of it, and his head over the other, and his noſe full of ſnuff. He was diſcourſing with a footman, who ſupplied the place of a valet. "My Lord," ſays the intendant, "I take the liberty to preſent a young man to you in the room of him you turned off the day before yeſterdy. Melendez your draper will anſwer for him. He aſſures me the lad has merit; and I believe you will be ſatisfied with him." "It is enough," replied the young Lord, "that you bring him to me. I take him into my ſervice. He ſhall be my valet de chambre. That buſineſs is done, Rodriguez," added he. "I have ſomething elſe to ſay to you. You are come very *a propos*. I was going to ſend for you. I have bad news to tell you, dear Rodriguez, I had ill luck laſt night. Beſides the hundred piſtoles I had of you, I loſt two hundred upon honour. You know of what conſequence it is for perſons of quality to diſcharge ſuch a debt. It is indeed the only one that the punctilio of honour obliges us to pay with punctuality. As for the reſt, they are not to be minded. You muſt therefore get me 200 piſtoles preſently, and ſend them to the Counteſs of Pedroſa," "Sir," ſays the ſteward, "it is much eaſier to ſay it than do it. Where, an't

an't pleaſe you, ſhall I find ſuch a ſum? Your tenants do not bring me a maravedi, though I threaten them hard. I muſt take care of your family, whatever is done for it; and they ſuck my very blood to anſwer the expenſe. Hitherto I have gone through with it; but I cannot hold out longer without a miracle." "All that you ſay ſignifies nothing," cries Don Matthias, interrupting him: "your particularities ſerve only to vex me. Do not think, Rodriguez, that I will change my courſe of life, or take care of my eſtate. A fine employment that! for a man of pleaſure as I am." "Truly, Sir," replied Rodriguez, "as matters go, I foreſee you will ſoon have that care taken off your hands." "You teaſe me to death," ſays the young Lord a little haſtily. "Let me ruin myſelf without knowing it. I tell you I muſt have 200 piſtoles. I muſt have them." "I will go again to the little old man, who has already lent you ſo much at intereſt," replies Rodriguez. "I do not care whom you go to," ſays Don Matthias, "ſo I have the money. Go to the devil for it if you will."

As he was ſpeaking theſe words, haſtily and angrily, the ſteward went out; and a young man of quality, called *Don Antonio Centelles*, entered. "What is the matter, friend?" ſays the latter to my maſter. "You are cloudy, and ſeem in a paſſion. Who has put you into ſuch an ill humour? I will lay a wager it is the man I met." "Yes," replied Don Matthias; "it is my ſteward. Every time

time I ſpeak to him, it is always thus. He will be talking of my affairs to me. He tells me I ſhall eat myſelf out of houſe and home. A wretch!——He will loſe nothing by it, however it goes." "I am juſt in the ſame caſe," cries Don Antonio. "I have ſuch another impertinent ſteward. When the coxcomb, after my repeated orders, brings me any money, he does it as if he gave it to me. He is full of his advice. "Sir," cries he, "you will undo yourſelf. Your rents are ſeized." I am forced to interrupt him, and cut him ſhort in his diſcourſe." "The worſt of it is," ſays Don Matthias, "we cannot do without theſe men. They are a neceſſary evil." "They are ſo," replies Centelles. "But hold, I have one of the pleaſanteſt thoughts come into head that ever man had." With that he burſt out into a fit of loud laughter; and then continued, "Nothing can be better contrived. We will turn theſe ſerious ſcenes into comic, and divert ourſelves with what has ſo much vexed us. It is this: I will demand of your ſteward as much money as you have occaſion for. Do you do the ſame by mine. Let them then lecture us as much as they pleaſe, we ſhall hear them with indifference. Your ſteward ſhall bring me his accounts. My ſteward ſhall do the ſame by you. You will hear of nothing but my extravagances. I ſhall hear of nothing but of yours. It will be a pretty frolic, will it not?"

They both tickled themſelves with the thoughts of it; and were laughing at it, when

when their mirth was interrupted by Gregorio Rodriguez, who returned, followed by a little old man that had ſcarce a hair upon his head, ſo bald was he. Don Antonio would have gone. "Adieu, Don Matthias," ſays he; "we ſhall ſee one another again by and by. I leave you with theſe gentlemen. You have doubtleſs ſome buſineſs of conſequence together." "No, no," replied my maſter, "ſtay, this ſage old perſon is an honeſt man who lends me money at 20 *per cent.*" "How! 20 *per cent.*" cries Centelles, in a ſurpriſe: "you light of honeſter men than I do. I am forced to pay dear for every penny I borrow: 40 *per cent.* is my common rate." "Extortion!" ſays the old uſurer. "What rogues they are? Do not they think there is another world? I do not wonder people rail ſo much at uſury. It is the exorbitancy of it that makes it ſo diſhonourable. If all my brethren were like me, we ſhould not be decried ſo much. For my part, I generally lend my money only to do my neighbour a kindneſs. Ah! if the times were as they have been, I would offer you my purſe without intereſt; and as bad as they are now, I can hardly in my conſcience take even ſo little as 20 *per cent.* But they ſay there is no ſilver in the mines; that the bowels of the earth are drained of it; and its ſcarcity makes me incroach upon morality. How much do you want?" continued he, addreſſing himſelf to my maſter. "Two hundred piſtoles," replied Don Matthias. "I have four hundred in a bag," ſays the uſurer.

"You may have half of them." Saying this, he pulled a blue bag from under his cloak, which ſeemed to me to be the very bag in which the peaſant Talego brought the five hundred piſtoles to Rodriguez. I gueſſed immediately what was the meaning of it; and ſoon after perceived that Melendez had not miſinformed me, when he boaſted of the ſteward's dexterity. The old man emptied the piſtoles on the table; the ſight of which made my maſter greedy of all. He was ſmitten with the totality of the ſum. "Signior Deſcomulgado," ſays he to the uſurer, "I have thought better of it, and find myſelf to be a blockhead. I aſked to borrow only what I had paſſed my word for, not thinking that I had not a penny in my purſe. I will take the whole four hundred piſtoles, to ſave the trouble of ſending for you again." "I intended," replied the uſurer, "to lend part of this money to a clergyman, who has entered ſome maidens in a nunnery, and is about furniſhing their lodgings for them; but ſince you have occaſion for all of it, it is at your ſervice. All you have to do, is, to provide ſecurity." "As for ſecurity," cries Rodriguez, interrupting him, and taking a paper out of his pocket, "you ſhall have very good. Signior Don Matthias need only ſign this bill; it will entitle you to five hundred piſtoles upon Talego, a rich peaſant of Mondejar." It is very well," replies the uſurer: "I am not very difficult." Then the ſteward preſented a pen to my maſter; who, without reading

reading it, ſet his name to the bill, whiſtling all the while he was writing.

This affair over, the old man bade my maſter adieu. Don Matthias ran and embraced him, crying, "Till next time, Signior Deſcomulgado, I am yours. I cannot imagine why they ſhould treat uſurers as raſcals. I think you are men neceſſary to the ſtate. You are the conſolation of a thouſand heirs, and the reſource of all the Lords, whoſe expenſe exceeds their income." "Very true," ſays Centelles; "the uſurers are men of honour, who cannot be too much honoured. Let me alſo embrace this worthy perſon, for the ſake of his twenty *per cent.*" Saying this, he approached the old man to hug him: and theſe two beaux puſhed him from one to the other, by way of diverſion, as a ball is ſtricken at tennis. After they had done with him, the ſteward, who deſerved it as much as he, and a great deal more, took him away. They were no ſooner gone, than Don Matthias ſent the two hundred piſtoles to the Counteſs of Pedroſa, by the lackey that was in the room with me. The other two hundred piſtoles he put up in a long ſilk purſe, which he uſually carried about with him. Being highly pleaſed to find himſelf ſo well in caſh, he demanded with a great deal of gaiety of Don Antonio, "What ſhall we do to-day? Let us conſult." "You talk like a man of ſenſe," replies Centelles; "let us deliberate upon the matter." While they were conſidering it, two other Lords entered the

chamber. Don Alexio Segiar, and Don Fernand de Gamboa, both of them near about the ſame age with my maſter, who was twenty-eight or twenty-nine years old. Theſe four gentlemen embraced as if they had not ſeen one another in ten years before. After which Don Fernand, who was a boon companion, ſaid, addreſſing himſelf to my maſter, "Where do you dine to-day? if you are not engaged, I will carry you to a tavern where you ſhall drink the liquor of the gods. I ſupped there, and did not come away till between five and ſix this morning." "Would to heaven," cried my maſter, "I had done the ſame, I ſhould not have loſt my money then." "For my part," ſaid Centelles, "I found out a new diverſion laſt night. I love change in my pleaſures. Nothing but variety can render life agreeable. One of my friends carried me to the houſe of a cuſtom-houſe-officer; a ſet of men who do their own and the ſtate's buſineſs together. Every thing was magnificent, and the entertainment very elegant: but the maſter of the houſe had ſomething in him extremely ridiculous. Though he was but an ordinary fellow at the beginning, he pretended mightily to quality, and his wife to beauty, though ſhe was horribly ugly. They had both a Biſcayan brogue in their talk, which made the ſilly things they ſaid ſtill more pleaſant. Their children, in number five or ſix, with their preceptor, were all ſet to table. Judge you what their breeding was."

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"I ſupped," cries Don Alexio Segiar, "with the actreſs Arſenia. We were ſix of us, Arſenia, Florimonda, with a coquet, a friend of hers, the Marquis de Zeneta, Don Juan de Moncado, and your ſervant. We ſpent the night in drinking and talking merrily. What pleaſure was it! It is true, Arſenia and Florimonda are not overſtocked with wit; but then they are wanton jades, and that is as good as witty. They are briſk, frolickſome wenches: and I love them a thouſand times better than your prim, preciſe dames, that pique themſelves of ſenſe and virtue."

CHAP. IV.

How Gil Blas became acquainted with valets belonging to beaux. An admirable ſecret they taught him to acquire the reputation of a man of wit; and the ſingular oath they made him take.

THeſe Lords continued to divert themſelves in this manner, till Don Matthias, whom I was all the while dreſſing, was ready to go out with them. He than bade me follow him; and all theſe four rakes went together to the tavern Don Fernand de Gamboa had propoſed to them. I marched behind them, with three other valets; for each of thoſe gentlemen had one. I obſerved with aſtoniſhment that each of thoſe valets copied after his maſter, and gave himſelf the ſame airs. I ſaluted them as their new comrade. They returned my ſalute: and one of them, after

having looked ſome time ſtedfaſtly upon me, ſaid, "I perceive, brother, by your air, that you never yet ſerved a young Lord." "No," replied I; "I have not been long in Madrid." "So I thought," ſaid he, "you have a country-look ſtill: you ſeem timorous and confuſed. You do not know how to behave yourſelf. But no matter: we ſhall make ſomething of you." "You flatter me," replied I. "No, no," ſays he; "there is no man ſuch a blockhead, but we can improve him. Depend upon it, we will do your buſineſs for you."

He need ſay no more to give me to underſtand that I had a company of rare ſparks for my brother-valets; and that I could not have fallen into better hands to learn my trade. At our coming to the tavern, we found an entertainment prepared for them. Signior Don Fernand had beſpoke it in the morning. Our maſters ſat down to table, and we ſtood ready to ſerve them. They were extremely pleaſant all the while they were at dinner; and I took great delight to hear them talk. Their character, their thoughts, and expreſſions diverted me. What fire! what fancy! They ſeemed to me to be a new ſpecies of men. After the deſſert was brought in, we ſpread the table with bottles of the moſt excellent wine; and left them to go to dinner ourſelves, in a room where the cloth was laid on purpoſe for us.

I ſoon found that the cavaliers of my fraternity had more merit than I at firſt imagi-

ned.

ned. They were not contented with aſſuming the manners of their maſters: they affected the language alſo: and theſe rogues imitated them ſo well, that there was no difference, except the quality-air. Their air was free and eaſy. I was charmed with their wit, and deſpaired of ever becoming ſo agreeable as they were. Don Fernand's valet, becauſe his maſter treated the others, had the management of the feaſt: and that we might want nothing, called the landlord, and ſaid, "Maſter Andrew Mantuano, give us ten bottles of your moſt excellent wine; and, as you are uſed to do, put them down in our maſter's reckoning." "With all my heart," replied the hoſt: "but Maſter Gaſpard," added he, "you know Signior Don Fernand owes me a great many reckonings already. If by your means I could touch a little money"—"Oh, Sir," anſwered the valet, "do not be in any pain on that ſcore. I will anſwer for him. My maſter's debts are as good as old gold. It is true, ſome ill-bred creditors have ſeized our rents; but we ſhall out them in a little while, ſell our eſtates and clear off all, without inquiring into the particulars of your bill." Mantuano brought the wine, notwithſtanding the rents were ſeized; and we drank it before the creditors were outed. We toaſted one another's healths by the ſurnames of our maſters. Don Antonio's valet called Don Fernand's *Gamboa*, and Don Fernand's valet called Don Antonio's *Centelles*. My name was *Silva* with them; and we got as fuddled by

by degrees, under thoſe borrowed names, as the Lords who bore them.

Though I was not ſo brilliant as my brethren, they expreſſed themſelves to be very well ſatisfied with me. "Silva," ſaid one of the looſeſt of them, "we ſhall make ſomething of thee. I find that thou haſt a genius at bottom, but thou doſt not yet know how to uſe it. The fear of ſpeaking ill, hinders thy ſpeaking any thing at a venture; and I muſt tell thee, that it is by venturing any thing in converſation that men now-a-days acquire the name of wits. Wouldſt thou ſhine? follow the vivacity of thy nature, and ſay every thing that comes uppermoſt. Thy impudence will paſs for a noble boldneſs. If thou canſt but crack one jeſt among a hundred impertinencies, the fooliſh things thou ſayeſt ſhall be taken no notice of; and thou ſhalt be deemed a man of merit. This is what our maſters practiſe ſo ſucceſsfully; and thus every man ſhould do that aims at the reputation of a diſtinguiſhed wit."

Beſides, that I had too great a deſire already to paſs for a fine genius, the ſecret to ſucceed in it appeared ſo eaſy to me, that I thought I ought not to neglect it. I made a trial of it on the ſpot; and the wine I had drank, gave ſucceſs to the experiment; that is, I talked, right or wrong, whatever came into my head; and had the good fortune, among many extravagancies, to mingle ſome points of wit, which were mightily applauded. This eſſay filled me with confi-

dence.

dence. I redoubled my uſual vivacity, to produce ſome agreeable ſally; and chance was ſo much my friend, that my efforts were not ineffectual.

"So now," ſays one of my brethren, the ſame that had ſpoke to me in the ſtreet, "doſt thou not begin to mend upon it? Thou haſt not been with us above two hours, and thou art already another creature. Thou wilt alter for the better more and more every day. This it is to ſerve perſons of quality. It raiſes the mind. City-places do not do ſo." "Without doubt," replied I; "and hereafter I will dedicate my ſervices to the nobility." "Well ſaid," cried Don Fernand's valet, almoſt drunk, "it is not for citizens to have ſuch ſuperiour geniuſes as we have. Let us take an oath, Gentlemen, among ourſelves, never to ſerve ſuch fellows. Let us ſwear by Styx." We all laughed at Gaſpard's thought; we applauded it; and every man, with his glaſs in his hand, took the burleſque oath.

We ſat at table till it pleaſed our maſters to retire. It was midnight firſt. And my brethren took it for an exceſs of ſobriety, that they went home ſo ſoon. Indeed theſe Lords went from the tavern, only to viſit a famous coquette who lived in the court-quarter, whoſe houſe was open night and day to men of pleaſure. She was about thirty-five years of age. She wore extremely well, and was ſo agreeable in company, that it is ſaid, ſhe ſold the remains of her beauty as dear as ſhe did the firſt fruits. She had always with her

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two or three coquettes of the firſt order, which drew a great concourſe of Lords to her houſe. They gamed in the afternoon; they ſupped at night, which they ſpent in drinking, and making themſelves merry. Our maſters ſtaid there till morning. So did we, without being tired; for while they were with the miſtreſſes, we diverted ourſelves with the maids. At laſt, when day broke, we ſeparated, and went each to his reſt. My maſter, according to cuſtom, roſe about noon, dreſſed himſelf, and went out. I waited upon him to the houſe of Don Antonio Centelles, where we found one Don Alvaro de Acunha, an old debauchee. All the young men, who would render themſelves agreeable, put themſelves into his hands. He formed them for pleaſure. He taught them how to ſhine in the world. and waſte their eſtates. He was not afraid of ſpending his. That buſineſs was done long before. After the natural embraces of theſe gentlemen were over, Centelles ſaid to my maſter, "S'death, Don Matthias, thou couldſt not come hither more *à propos*. Alvar is come to carry me to dine with a citizen who treats the Marquis de Zeneta and Don Juan de Moncado to-day. Thou ſhalt go with us." "What is the citizen's name?" ſays Don Matthias. "*Gregorio de Noriega*," replies Don Alvaro, "and I will tell you, in two words, what this young man is. His father, who is a rich jeweller, is gone to trade in jewels in foreign countries, and left with him, when he went, a very good income.

income. Gregorio is a coxcomb, who has a towardly diſpoſition to ruin himſelf, and ſet up for a beau and a wit, in ſpite of nature. He has deſired me to inſtruct him. I govern him; and can aſſure you, Gentlemen, I have put him in a right way. His income is already pretty well diminiſhed." "I do not doubt it," cried Centelles. "I ſee him methinks in an almſhouſe. Come, Don Matthias," continued he, "let us ſcrape acquaintance with this man, and contribute to his ruin." "With all my heart," replied my maſter; "I love dearly to ſee thoſe mechanic fops reduced, who pretend to our airs and manners. Nothing, for example, pleaſed me better, than when the collector's ſon was ſo beggared by gaming and vanity, in making a figure like a Lord, that he was forced to ſell his houſe over his head." "As for him," replies Antonio, "he does not deſerve to be pitied. He is as great a fop in his miſery, as he was in his proſperity."

Centelles and my maſter accompanied Don Alvaro to Gregorio Noriega's. Mogicon and I went with them, overjoyed that we were like to come in for ſnips, and contribute alſo to the citizen's ruin. When we came there, we found ſeveral men very buſy in getting dinner ready. The fumes of the ragouts were moſt grateful odours to us. The Marquis de Zeneta, and Don Juan de Moncado were juſt arrived. The maſter of the houſe appeared to be what Alvaro ſaid, a great coxcomb. He in vain affected to aſſume the airs

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of a beau. He was a wretched copy of ſo excellent an original; or rather a blockhead that would fain have put himſelf off for a man of ſenſe. Repreſent to yourſelf a man of this character, among five ſparks rallying him, each of them making a jeſt of him, and endeavouring to draw him into extravagancies. "Gentlemen," ſays Don Alvaro, after the firſt compliments were over, "I recommend Signior Gregorio de Noriega to you for an accompliſhed cavalier. He has a thouſand fine qualities. Do you know how he has improved himſelf? Put it to the experiment: he is equally maſter of all the ſciences, from logic to orthography." "You do me too much honour," ſays the citizen, interrupting him with an awkward ſmile; "I could turn that argument upon you, Signior Alvaro; you, who are ſtyled one of the fountains of learning." "I did not think," cried Don Alvaro, "that I ſhould have drawn upon myſelf ſo witty a panegyric. But to ſay the truth, Gentlemen, Signior Gregorio cannot fail of acquiring a reputation in the world." "As for me," cries Don Antonio, "what I take to be moſt charming in him, and value infinitely above his orthography, is, the judicious choice he makes of the perſons he frequents. Inſtead of confining himſelf to a city converſation, he keeps company with none but young Lords, not minding what a charge it puts him to. This ſhews a greatneſs of ſoul, and that he knows how to ſpend his eſtate with delicacy and deſcernment."

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These ironical discourses made way for a thousand of the same nature. They all fell upon poor Gregorio; and he was such a fool as not to perceive it. On the contrary, he took every thing to be meant as it was said, and was mightily pleased with his guests. He even imagined, that they did him a favour, to turn him into ridicule. In fine they played upon him all the while they were at dinner. They staid with him all day, and all night too. We drank what we would, as well as our masters, and were both in a handsome pickle when we left him.

CHAP. V.

Gil Blas sets up for a gallant man, and gets acquaintance with a pretty girl.

I Slept some hours, and rose in a gay humour, remembering the advice Melendez gave me. I went, while my master was yet asleep, to make my court to our steward, who seemed to take my respects very graciously. He asked me how I liked this way of living? I replied, it was new to me; but I did not despair of accustoming myself to it; which indeed I did effectually, and in a little time too. I changed humour, and from grave became frolicsome. Don Antonio's valet complimented me on my metamorphosis, and told me that I wanted nothing now to finish me for a cavalier but an affair of gallantry, which was absolutely necessary to render a young man completely polite. That all our comrades were

beloved by ſome fair lady, and that he, for his part, was in the good graces of two ladies of quality. I believed the raſcal lied. "Monſieur Mogicon," ſays I, "you are a jolly, handſome fellow; but I cannot underſtand how women of quality can fall in love with a man of your condition." "Oh! as for that," replied he, "they do not know who I am. I make conqueſts in my maſter's cloaths, and even with his name, as thus: I am dreſſed like a young lord; I imitate the manners of one; I go to the public places; I ogle all the women I meet, till I fix on one that gives me encouragement; I follow her, and get into talk with her. I call myſelf *Don Antonio Centelles*. I demand an aſſignation. The lady ſeems coy. I preſs her. She complies, *&c cætera*. "By this means, child," continues he, "I have affairs of gallantry upon my hands; and I adviſe thee to follow my example." I had too great a deſire to become a gallant man, not to take his advice. Beſides, I did not find any repugnance in myſelf to an amorous intrigue. I deſigned therefore to transform myſelf into a young lord, and ſeek out ſome gallant adventures. I durſt not diſguiſe myſelf in our palace, for fear notice ſhould be taken of it. I took one of the fineſt ſuits in my maſter's wardrobe. I bundled it up, and carried it to a barber's, a friend of mine, where I might dreſs and undreſs myſelf commodiouſly. I made myſelf as fine as I could. The barber aſſiſted me in doing it; and when I thought we had done enough,

I marched towards the walks of St Jerom, where I doubted not but I ſhould meet with more opportunities than one to enter upon gallantry. But before I got there, I lighted upon an adventure, which I was wonderfully charmed with. As I was croſſing a by-ſtreet, I ſaw a lady, richly dreſſed, and very well-ſhaped, go out of a little houſe into a hackney-coach which waited at the door. I ſtepped to look after her, and ſaluted her in a way which ſhewed I was not a little taken with her. She, on her part, to ſhew that ſhe obſerved my attention, perhaps more than I thought ſhe did, lifted up her veil for a moment, and diſcovered one of the prettieſt faces I ever ſaw. The coach drove away; and I ſtaid behind in the emotion this apparition had cauſed in my breaſt. "A lovely creature," ſaid I to myſelf; "ſhe will furniſh me, I will warrant her. If the two ladies that are in love with Mogicon are as handſome as this, he is a happy dog. I ſhould think myſelf ſo, if I had ſuch a miſtreſs." As I was making theſe reflections, I chanced to caſt my eye at a window of the houſe whence this amiable perſon came, and perceived an old woman, who beckoned to me to enter. I flew into it, and found the venerable, diſcreet matron in a parlour, neatly furniſhed. She took me for a marquis at leaſt, and ſaluting me very reſpectfully, ſaid, "I doubt not, my Lord, you have an ill opinion of a woman, who, without knowing you, made a ſign to you to enter the houſe; but you will alter it, per-

haps, when you know that I deal with all the world in this free way. You look to be a court-lord." "You judge well, my dear," cried I, ſtretching out my right leg, and falling away a little to the left, "I may without vanity ſay, I am one of the beſt families in Spain." "You have the air," replied ſhe; "and I muſt own, I love to do good offices to perſons of your quality. It is my foible. I took notice of you at my window, and obſerved you ogled a lady who had juſt then parted with me. Do you like her? Tell me truly." "Yes," cried I, "I am ſmitten with her, upon my honour. I never ſaw ſo charming a creature. Bring us together, and depend upon my gratitude. You have done ſervices of this kind for other perſons of my quality, and know by that how well we are uſed to pay for them." "I have told you," ſays ſhe, "that I am devoted to ſerve the quality. I delight to be uſeful to them. I entertain here, for example, certain ladies, whom an appearance of virtue hinders from ſeeing their gallants at home." "Very well," cried I; "and it is probable you have been doing as much for the lady we talk of." "No," replied ſhe, "it is a young widow of quality, who is willing to have a lover; but ſhe is ſo nice, I cannot tell whether you would ſucceed, whatever may be your merit. I have already recommended three very likely gentlemen, but ſhe has refuſed them all." "'Sdeath! my dear," ſaid I, with an air of confidence, "do but bring me into her company once, and I will

will anſwer for the reſt; I want to have ſome dialogue with ſo nice a lady. I never yet met with one too nice for me." "Well then," anſwered the old woman, "come hither to-morrow at this time, and you ſhall ſatisfy your curioſity." I will not fail," replied I. "We ſhall ſee whether a young lord may not pretend to a conqueſt."

I returned thence to the barber's, without looking out for other adventures, and very impatient to ſee the end of this. The next day, when I had adjuſted myſelf to the beſt advantage, I went at the time appointed to the old woman's. "My Lord," ſays ſhe, "you are punctual, and I am glad of it. The buſineſs is worth the trouble. I have ſeen our young widow; and we have had a great deal of diſcourſe about you. I was bid not to ſpeak of it; but I am ſo much your friend, that I cannot help it. She is as much taken with you, as you are with her; and you are in a fair way to be happy. Between you and me, this lady is a choice bit. Her huſband did not long live with her. He was but a ſort of a ſhadow; ſhe is as good as a virgin." The old woman meant, without doubt, one of her virgins, who knew how to paſs their celibacy without wanting huſbands. The heroine of the aſſignation arrived ſoon after in an hackney-coach. As ſoon as ſhe came into the hall, I accoſted her with five or ſix foppiſh bows, and then approaching her very familiarly, ſaid, "My princeſs, behold a lord that is taken in your ſnare. Your image has not been out of

my mind ever ſince I ſaw you yeſterday; and you have driven out a dulneſs that had began to take footing there." "The triumph is too glorious for me," replied ſhe, liſting up her veil: "but I muſt not rejoice too much. Young lords love change; and nothing is ſo hard to keep as a courtier's heart." "Ah! my queen," cried I; "if you pleaſe, let us leave that to the future, and think now of the preſent. You are fair; I am in love. If my love is agreeable to you, let us engage without reflection: let us embark like mariners, and not dread the dangers of the ſea. Let us think only of pleaſure." At theſe words I threw myſelf at her feet in a tranſport of joy; and to imitate the beaux, I preſſed her very petulantly to conſent to my happineſs. She ſeemed to be complying; but would not yield at the firſt meeting: ſo ſhe puſhed me back; "Hold," cried ſhe, "you are too forward; you act like a rake: I am afraid you are a young debauchee." "Puh, Madam," ſaid I, "do you hate what all women that are not vulgar love? None but citizens are afraid of a rake." "Your reaſons," replied ſhe, "are too powerful to be reſiſted. I perceive it is to no purpoſe to diſſemble with you young lords. A woman muſt come half-way. Know therefore the victory you have gained," continued ſhe, with ſeeming confuſion, as if her modeſty had been injured by that confeſſion, "you have inſpired me with ſentiments I never felt before; and I want nothing now but to know who you are, to make me chuſe you for

for my lover. I take you to be a young lord, and a man of honour: however, I am not ſure of it; and as prejudiced as I am in your favour, I will not give myſelf to one I do not know."

I called to mind in what manner Don Antonio's valet told me he uſed to extricate himſelf out of ſuch difficulties; and reſolving, like him, to paſs for the maſter; "Madam," ſays I to my widow, "I ſhall make no ſcruple to tell you my name. It is too noble for a man to be aſhamed of it. Did you never hear talk of Don Matthias de Silva?" "Yes," replied ſhe, "I have ſeen him at a friend's of mine." As impudent as I was become, this anſwer of hers puzzled me a little; but I recollected myſelf in a moment, and put my genius to the ſtretch to come off cleverly. "Ah! my angel," replied I, "you know a lord that I know alſo. I am of the ſame family. His uncle married a ſiſter-in-law of an uncle of my father's. We are, as you ſee, very nearly related. My name is *Don Cæſar*. I am the only ſon of the illuſtrious Don Fernand de Ribera, who was killed fifteen years ago in a battle on the frontiers of Portugal. I might give you a particular account of the action, which was very hot; but it would be to loſe the moments which are precious in love, and may be employed much more agreeably."

I became more preſſing and paſſionate after this diſcourſe. My princeſs was not at all moved by it. The favours ſhe gave me, only made me long for others which ſhe refuſed.

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The cruel creature left me in this condition, went to her coach, and drove away. Though I was not entirely happy, yet I was pleaſed with my good fortune. "If I have not obtained the favour I preſſed for," ſaid I to myſelf, it is becauſe my goddeſs is a lady of quality, who would not appear forward, nor comply with my deſires at the firſt interview. Her high birth makes her delay my joys for a few days." With all theſe favourable thoughts of her, I could not ſometimes help thinking ſhe might be a cunning gypſey, and did it to draw me in. However, I loved to think the beſt; and the moſt advantageous opinion I had of her, had the predominancy in my mind. We agreed when we parted to meet again the next day; and the hopes of enjoying then the height of my wiſhes, gave me a taſte of them beforehand. With theſe pleaſing fancies in my head, I returned to my barber's. I changed my cloaths, and went to my maſter, whom I knew to be at the tennis-court. I found him at play, and obſerved that he gained, by his looks: for he was not one of thoſe inſenſible gameſters that make or ruin themſelves without changing countenance. He was merry and inſolent when he got, and ſurly when he loſt. From the tennis-court he went in a very gay humour to the Prince's theatre. I waited upon him to the playhouſe-door, where, putting a ducat into my hand, he cried to me, "There, Gil Blas, ſince I have had good fortune to-day, be thou ſo much the better for it. Go, divert thyſelf with

with thy comrades, and come to me at midnight at Arſenia's, where I ſhall ſup with Don Alexio Segiar." At theſe words he went into the houſe, and I ſtaid without, ſtudying with whom to ſpend my ducat, according to the intention of the founder. I was not long at a loſs about it. Clarino, Don Alexio's valet, falling in my way, I took him with me to the firſt tavern, and we ſtaid there till midnight. From thence we went to Arſenia's, whither Clarino had orders to come as well as I. A little lackey opened the door, and conducted us into a little hall, where Arſenia and Florimonda's women were making merry, while their miſtreſſes were doing the ſame with our maſters. The coming of two good gueſts, who were already half fuddled, could not be diſagreeable to two ſuch baggages as they were, eſpecially conſidering they were players. But how was I aſtoniſhed, when, in one of them, I diſcovered my widow, my adorable widow, whom I took to be a counteſs or a marchioneſs. She was no leſs ſurpriſed to find her dear Don Cæſar de Ribera reduced to a valet de chambre. We, however, looked upon one another ſome time, without being out of countenance. We had both of us a great mind to burſt out a-laughing; and we did not long forbear it. After which, Laura, ſo my princeſs was called, taking me aſide, while Clarino talked with her companion, and giving me her hand, whiſpered me, "Since it is ſo, Signior Don Cæſar, let us not reproach one another, but

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do each other juſtice. You played your part admirably, and I did not act mine ill: what ſay you? Did not you take me for one of thoſe pretty women of quality who delight in intrigue?" "It is true," replied I; "but be you who you will, my queen, I have not changed ſentiments in changing forms. Accept of my ſervices, and ſuffer Don Matthias's valet to finiſh what Don Cæſar ſo happily began." "Well," ſaid ſhe, "I love thee better as thou art now naturally, than I did before. Thou art as a man, the ſame as I am as a woman: that is the greateſt encomium I can beſtow on thee. I admit thee among the number of my adorers. We have no need of the agency of the old woman. Thou mayſt come hither freely. The ladies of the theatre live without conſtraint, hidgelly pidgelly among the men. The public ſees it, laughs at it; and what then? are we not made for their diverſion?

We left off here, becauſe there were others in the room. The converſation became general, briſk, wanton, and full of very intelligible double entendres. Every one ſaid ſomething, and eſpecially my amiable Laura, Arſenia's woman, ſhewed that ſhe had a great deal more wit than virtue. We could often hear our maſters and the players laugh aloud; and gueſſed by that, their converſation was of the ſame nature with ours. If all the fine things which were ſaid that night at Arſenia's were written down, it would make a book of great inſtruction for youth. The time of departing,

departing, that is, day-break, coming upon us, we each retired with our maſters, Clarino with Don Alexio, and I with Don Matthias.

CHAP. VI.

Of the diſcourſe of ſome Lords about the players of the prince's company.

IN the forenoon my maſter received a billet from Don Alexio Segiar to deſire him to come to him. We went to his houſe, and found there the Marquis of Zeneta, and another young Lord whom I had not ſeen before. "Don Matthias," ſays Segiar to my maſter, preſenting that cavalier to him, "this is my kinſman Don Pompeio de Caſtro. He has been bred up from his youth in the court of Portugal. He arrived at Madrid laſt night, and returns to-morrow to Liſbon. He can give me but this one day. We muſt make the moſt of ſo precious a one; and I thought I ſhould want you and the Marquis de Zeneta, to help me out in it." Upon this my maſter and Don Alexio's kinſman embraced; and many a compliment paſſed between them. I was mightily pleaſed with what Don Pompeio ſaid, he ſeeming to be a man of as much judgment as wit.

They dined at Segiar's: and thoſe lords, after dinner, gamed till play-time. They then went together to the prince's theatre, to ſee a new tragedy, called *The queen of Carthage*. When the play was done, they returned to ſup at the ſame place where they had

had dined. Their converſation rolled at firſt on the play they had heard, and afterwards on the players. "As for the play," cries Don Matthias, "I have no opinion of it. Æneas is flatter there than in the Æneid; but it was played divinely. What does Don Pompeio think of it? He does not ſeem to be of the ſame ſentiment. "Gentlemen," ſays the cavalier, ſmiling, "I obſerved you were ſo charmed with the actors, and eſpecially with the actreſſes, that I dare not give you my opinion." "Very well," cries Don Alexio, interrupting him; "have a care what you ſay of our actreſſes before us, who are the trumpets of their fame, drink with them every day, and are their guarantees. We will give certificates for them if you require it." "I doubt it not," replied his kinſman; "you will warrant their lives and manners as well as their merit, I ſee you are ſo much their friends."

"Your Liſbon players," ſays the Marquis de Zeneta, ſmiling, "are without doubt much better than ours." "Moſt certainly," replied Don Pompeio; "there are ſome at leaſt that have no defect." "Theſe are ſure of your certificate," ſays the Marquis. "I have no correſpondence with them," replies Don Pompeio. "I never drink with them: I am therefore qualified to judge of them without prejudice. Tell me truly, Do you really take your players to be an excellent company?" "Not I," ſays the Marquis; "I will ſpeak but for very few of them. I will give up all the

the reſt. Will not you allow that the actreſs who played the part of Dido, did it incomparably? Did ſhe not repreſent that queen with all the grandeur and all the grace that ſuit the idea we have of her? Did you not admire to ſee with what art ſhe engages a ſpectator, and makes him feel the emotions of all the paſſions ſhe expreſſes? She is perfect miſtreſs of all the beauties of declamation." "I grant," replied Don Pompeio, "ſhe knows how to move and touch: never player had more bowels, and the repreſentation was fine: but ſhe is not an actreſs without fault. Two or three things in her playing ſhocked me. When ſhe would denote ſurpriſe, ſhe rolls her eyes in a furious manner, which does not become a princeſs. Add to this, that by heightening her voice, which is naturally low, ſhe ſpoils the ſweetneſs of it, and makes it harſh. Beſides, in more than one place of the play, ſhe did not ſeem to underſtand what ſhe ſaid: but I will rather think her thoughts were diſtracted, than accuſe her of want of underſtanding."

"By what I can ſee," ſays Don Matthias to the critic, "our players are not like to have any panegyrics from you." "Pardon me," replies Don Pompeio, "I diſcover a talent through their defects; nay, I muſt own to you, I was charmed with the actreſs who played the woman's part in the interlude. She has a fine genius, and gave a grace to every thing ſhe ſaid. If there was a jeſt in it, ſhe ſeaſoned it with a malicious ſmile, and added

new charms to it. One may blame her ſometimes for giving too much way to her natural fire, and paſſing the bounds of an honeſt boldneſs: but we muſt not be too ſevere. I would only have her correct an ill cuſtom. Often in the middle of a ſcene, in a ſerious place, ſhe on a ſudden interrupts the action, to pleaſe a fond deſire of laughing, with which ſhe is taken. You will ſay the pit clapped her then. Therein indeed ſhe is happy."

"And what do you think of the men?" cries the Marquis, interrupting him; "you will ſure have no mercy on them, ſince you ſpare the women ſo little." "No," ſays Don Pompeio, "there are ſome of the young actors very promiſing; and I was eſpecially very well pleaſed with the fat actor who played the part of Dido's firſt miniſter. He ſpeaks naturally, and like our Portugueſe players." "If you were pleaſed with him," ſays Segiar, "you muſt ſurely be charmed with the player that acted the part of Æneas. Is he not a fine actor? an original?" "An original indeed!" replied the critic. "He has tones which are particular to him, and very ſharp ones. He is almoſt always out of nature. He hurries over the words in which the ſenſe lies, and dwells on the others; nay, he raiſes his voice on conjunctions. He diverted me extremely, and particularly where he expreſſed to his confident the violence he did to himſelf to leave Dido. Grief cannot be declared more comicly." "Very fine, couſin," ſays Don Alexio; "you will at laſt make us believe

lieve the court of Portugal have no refined *gout*. Do you not know that the actor you talk of is mightilly admired? did you not hear how he was clapped?" "That is no proof of his merit," replies Don Pompeio; "the worſt actors are commonly the greateſt favourites of the pit, and have the moſt claps. The audience likes what is glaring, and neglects what is juſt, as Phædrus informs us, by an ingenious fable; which ſuffer me to relate to you as follows.

"The citizens of a certain city met at a great ſquare to ſee ſome pantomimes act their buffooneries. Among theſe actors there was one whom the people applauded every moment. This buffoon, when the ſhow was almoſt over, would needs cloſe it with ſomething new. He came alone upon the ſtage, bent down, covered his head with his cloak, and ſet himſelf to counterfeit the cry of a ſucking pig. He did it ſo well, that they all believed he had a pig under his cloak. They cried out to him to throw open his clock and robe. He did ſo; and the people finding there was nothing under them, repeated their applauſes with more fury than ever. A peaſant who was among the ſpectators, was ſhocked with ſo many tokens of their admiration: "Gentlemen," cries he, "you are in the wrong to be ſo charmed with this buffoon. He is not ſuch a rare actor as you take him to be. I can act a ſucking pig better than he; and if you queſtion it, come here to-morrow, and you ſhall be witneſſes of it yourſelves." The citi-

zens prejudiced in favour of the pantomime, met again the next day, rather to hiſs the peaſant, than ſee what he could do. The two rivals appeared on the theatre. The buffoon began, and received the ſame applauſes as the day before. Then the peaſant bending down in his turn, and covering his head with his cloak, took a true ſucking pig, which he had under his arm, by the ear, and the pig ſqueaked heartily. However, the audience gave the preference to the pantomime, and hiſſed the peaſant; who pulling out the ſucking pig, and ſhewing it to them, ſaid, "Gentlemen, it is not I that you hiſs; it is the pig itſelf. See what judges you are."

"Couſin," cries Don Alexio, "thy fable is a little too cloſe a one. Nevertheleſs, ſpite of thy ſucking pig, we ſhall not give up our actors and actreſſes. Let us change the diſcourſe: we have had enough of this. You will go to-morrow then, as deſirous as I am to keep you longer." "I ſhould be glad to ſtay," replies his kinſman, "if I could. I have already told you that I came to the court of Spain about a ſtate-affair. I ſpoke to the prime miniſter yeſterday. I am to ſee him again to-morrow morning, and ſhall depart a moment after to return to Liſbon." "Thou art become a Portugueſe," ſays Don Alexio; "and in all likelihood will return no more to Madrid." "I believe not," replies Don Pompeio. "I have the happineſs to be beloved by the King of Portugal. I live pleaſantly at his court: yet, as gracious as he is

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to me, can you think it? I was very near leaving his dominions for ever." "On what occaſion?" cries the Marquis, "Pray tell us." "Moſt willingly," replies Don Pompeio; "and my ſtory is contained in what I am about to relate to you."

CHAP. VII.

The ſtory of Don Pompeyo do Caſtro.

DON Alexio, continues he, knows, that, from my youth, I took an inclination to arms; and ſeeing our country was in peace, I went to Portugal; from whence I croſſed over to Africa with the Duke of Braganza, who gave me a poſt in his army. I was a cadet, and not one of the richeſt in Spain, which ſpurred me on to ſignalize myſelf in ſeveral actions; and that made me taken notice of by the general. I did my duty ſo well, that the Duke advanced me, and put me in a condition to continue in his ſervice with honour. After a long war, the end of which you are not ignorant of, I ſettled at court; and the king, on the recommendation of the general officers, allowed me a conſiderable penſion. To ſhew how ſenſible I was of that monarch's generoſity, I let no opportunity ſlip to expreſs my gratitude by my aſſiduity. I was near him at all hours when the courtiers were admitted into his preſence. By this conduct I inſenſibly became beloved by him, and received new benefits from him.

Having one day diſtinguiſhed myſelf in a

ring-courſe and bull-fight, the whole court extolled my ſtrength and dexterity; and when, loaded with their applauſes, I got home, I found a billet which informed me, that a lady, the conqueſt of whom ought to rejoice me more than all the honour I had acquired that day, deſired to ſpeak with me; and that I need only come to a certain place appointed, in the duſk of the evening. I was indeed more pleaſed with this letter than all the applauſes before mentioned; and imagined that the perſon who ſent it was a woman of the firſt quality. You don't doubt but I was punctual at the time and place. An old woman waited there to be my guide; and introduced me by a little door into the garden of a great houſe, whence ſhe carried me into a rich cloſet, full of rich decorations, ſaying, "Stay there, I will go tell my miſtreſs of your coming. I examined the riches of the cloſet, which was enlightened by wax-candles in golden ſconces; and this convinced me the lady muſt be as noble as I conceived her to be. If every thing I ſaw aſſured me of the nobility of her birth before ſhe came, her appearance, her grand and majeſtic air confirmed me in that opinion; which however was a wrong one.

"Signior Cavalier," ſays ſhe, "after the ſtep I have taken in your favour, it would be in vain to endeavour to conceal the tender ſentiments I have for you. The merit which the court were witneſſes of this day, in regard to you, was not the firſt motive of them: it only haſtened the diſcovery of them. I have

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ſeen you more than once. I informed myſelf of you; and your character is ſo good, that I reſolved to follow my inclination. Do not think," continues ſhe, "that you have made a conqueſt of a ducheſs. I am only the widow of a captain of the king's guards; but what will render your victory glorious, is, the preference I give you to one of the greateſt lords in the kingdom. The Duke of Almeyda loves me, and ſpares for nothing to pleaſe me. He could never ſucceed; and I ſuffer his careſſes only out of vanity."

Though I found by this diſcourſe that I had to do with a coquette, yet I was not diſpleaſed at the adventure. Donna Hortenſia, for that was her name, was ſtill in the flower of her youth, and her beauty charmed me. Beſides, I was offered the poſſeſſion of a heart which a duke ſought after in vain. What a triumph was that for a young Spaniſh cavalier! I threw myſelf at Hortenſia's feet, to thank her for her goodneſs to me. I ſaid all a gallant man could think of; and ſhe had reaſon to be ſatisfied with my tranſports. Thus we parted the beſt friends in the world, after we had agreed to meet every evening that the Duke d'Almeyda did not come thither; which I was promiſed to have exact intelligence of. They did not fail me; and at laſt I became the Adonis of this new Venus.

But the pleaſures of life are not of eternal duration. Whatever meaſures the lady took to keep our commerce from my rival, he came to the knowledge of what it imported us very much

much he ſhould be ignorant of: one of the lady's maids, in diſguſt, told him all. This Lord, naturally generous, but proud, jealous, and paſſionate, was enraged at my audaciouſneſs. Choler and jealouſy diſordered his mind; and hearkening only to his fury, he reſolved to be revenged of me after an infamous manner. One night when I was at Hortenſia's, he waited for me at the garden-door with all his valets, armed with ſticks. As ſoon as I came out, he cauſed thoſe raſcals to ſeize me, and ordered them to beat me to death. "Strike," ſays he, "let him periſh under your hands. I will thus chaſtiſe his inſolence." At theſe words his people aſſaulted me all together, and gave me ſo many blows that they laid me for dead on the place. After which they retired with their maſter, to whom this cruel ſpectacle had been a very pleaſant one. About day-break ſome perſons came by, who obſerving I breathed ſtill, had the charity to carry me to a ſurgeon; and I, falling into the hands of a ſkilful one, was perfectly cured in two months time. I then went to court, and lived there as I uſed to do. I left off viſiting Hortenſia, who took no ſtep to let me ſee her again, becauſe the Duke had at this price forgiven her infidelity.

As no body was ignorant of my adventure, nor took me for a coward, every one admired that I ſhould ſit down ſo quietly under ſuch an affront; for I did not ſay what I thought, and I ſeemed not to reſent it. Some believed, that, as ſtout as I was, the rank of the offender

fender kept me in awe, and obliged me to put up the offence. Others, with more reaſon, miſtruſted my ſilence, and looked on the peaceable ſituation of my ſoul as a deceitful calm. The king was of the latter opinion; and imagined that I would not ſuffer ſuch an outrage without revenge, as ſoon as I had an opportunity. To find out my deſign, he took me into his cloſet one day, and ſaid to me, "Don Pompeio, I know the accident that has happened to you; and muſt confeſs I am ſurpriſed to find you ſo eaſy under it." "You certainly diſſemble, Sir," replied I, "I know not who the offender is. I was attacked in the night by men who are unknown to me. It is a misfortune I muſt bear as well as I can." "No, no," ſays the king, "do not think that I can be ſo put upon, I have heard all. The Duke of Almeyda has mortally affronted you. You are noble, and a Caſtilian. I know what theſe qualities will engage you to do. You have formed a reſolution to be revenged. Tell me what you intend to do; I require you. Fear nothing; you ſhall not repent of truſting me with your ſecret."

"Since your Majeſty will have me," replied I, "I muſt inform you what I have reſolved to do in this matter. Yes, my Lord, I do meditate revenge for the affront I have ſuffered. Every man that bears ſuch a name as mine is accountable to his race. You know how baſely I have been treated: and to be revenged in a manner anſwerable to the offence, I propoſe to aſſaſſinate the Duke of Almeyda, by

by ſtabbing him with a dagger, or ſhooting him through the head: after which I will make my eſcape, if I can, into Spain. This is my deſign." It is raſh," ſaid the King, "yet I cannot condemn it, after the cruel outrage the Duke of Almeyda has done you. He deſerves the chaſtiſement you have reſerved for him: but do not execute your enterpriſe ſo ſoon. Let me find out ſome way to make the matter up between you." "Ah! my Lord," cried I, a little angrily, "why did you oblige me to reveal my ſecret to you?" "What way can there be found out? If it is not one that gives you ſatisfaction," ſaid he, interrupting me, "you may do what you intend. I ſhall not abuſe the confidence you put in me: I will not betray your honour. Be under no manner of concern on that ſcore."

I was extremely deſirous to know how the king would have this buſineſs accommodated. It was thus: he talked to the Duke of Almeyda about it. "Duke," ſays he, "you have affronted Don Pompeio de Caſtro. You are not ignorant that he is a man of an illuſtrious family, a gentleman whom I love, and who has done me ſervice. You ought to give him ſatisfaction." "I ſhall not refuſe it," replies the Duke. "If he complains of my fury, I am ready to do him juſtice by way of arms." "There muſt be another reparation," cries the king. "A Spaniſh gentleman underſtands the point of honour too well to fight fairly with a baſe aſſaſſin. I cannot call you any thing elſe; and you cannot expiate the

indignities

indignities of your action, but by preſenting a ſtick yourſelf to your enemy, and offering to receive his blows." "Heaven!" cries the Duke, "would you have a man of my rank, my Lord, ſo debaſe himſelf? to ſtoop to a gentleman, and receive blows from him?" "No," replies the monarch; "I will oblige Don Pompeio to promiſe me that he will not ſtrike you: but do you aſk his pardon when you preſent the ſtick to him; that is all I require of you." "It is too much, my Lord," ſays the Duke, haſtily; "I had rather be ſtill expoſed to the danger I run from his concealed reſentment." "Your life is dear to me," replies the king; "and I would prevent this affair's having any ill conſequence: that it may end with as little diſlike as may be to you, I myſelf will be the only witneſs of the ſatisfaction I order you to give the Spaniard." The king ſtood in need of all his power over the Duke, to bring him to conſent to do ſo mortifying a thing. He brought him to it at laſt. He then ſent for me, and told me what diſcourſe he had had with the Duke of Almeyda, demanding if I would be content with the reparation they two had agreed upon? I replied, Yes; and would be ſo far from ſtriking the offender, that I would not take the ſtick he preſented to me." The matter being thus regulated, the Duke and I met one day, at a certain hour, in the king's apartment. His Majeſty took us into his cloſet: "Come," ſays he to the Duke, "acknowledge your fault, and deſerve a pardon." My enemy

enemy then made excuſes to me, and preſented me a ſtick he had in his hand. "Don Pompeio," cries the King at the inſtant, "take the ſtick, and let not my preſence hinder you from doing juſtice to your injured honour. I diſcharge you from the promiſe you made me, not to ſtrike the Duke." "No, my Lord," replied I; "it is ſufficient that he puts himſelf in a poſture to receive the blows. An affronted Spaniard demands no more." "Well," ſays the king, "ſince you are both content with this ſatisfaction, you may now determine the matter in a regular way, at the points of your ſwords." "That is what I earneſtly deſire," cries the Duke; "and nothing but that can make me reconcile myſelf to the ſhameful ſtep I have been taking." At theſe words he went out, full of rage and confuſion; and two hours after he ſent to tell me he waited for me in a by-place. I went thither, and found him there in a diſpoſition to fight it out to the laſt. He was not above five and forty years of age. He wanted neither courage nor ſkill. The parly was equal between us. "Come, Don Pompeio," ſays he, "let us end our difference. We both of us have reaſon to be angry; you for the treatment you met with from me; and I for having aſked your pardon." Saying this, he drew ſo quickly that I had ſcarce time to be upon my guard. He puſhed at firſt very vigorouſly; but I had the good fortune to parry all his thruſts. I puſhed at him in my turn; and found I had to do with a man who knew

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as well how to defend himſelf as to attack. I know not what might have happened, had not his foot ſlipt in retiring, and that ſlip threw him on his back. I then held my hand, and ſaid, "Riſe." "Why do you ſpare me?" replied he: "your mercy is an affront to me." "I ſhall take no advantage of your misfortune," ſays I: "it would be an injury to my glory. I ſay once more, Riſe, and let us continue the combat." "Don Pompeio," replied he, getting up, "after ſo generous an action, honour will not permit me to fight againſt you. What would the world ſay of me, if I ſhould kill you? I ſhould paſs for a ſcoundrel, that took away the life of a man who might have taken mine. I ſhall not put it in any danger, and I find my gratitude gives birth to ſoft tranſports, which ſucceed the furious emotions that before ruffled my ſoul. Don Pompeio," continues he, "let us ceaſe hating one another; let us do more, let us be friends." "Ah! my Lord," cried I, "I accept of your agreeable propoſal with joy. I ſwear to you from this moment a ſincere friendſhip; and to give you preſent proofs of it, I add to it, that I will never ſet foot within Hortenſia's doors again, though ſhe ſhould deſire it." "No," ſays he, "I ought rather to yield the lady to you, ſince ſhe prefers you in her heart." "But you love her," replied I, interrupting him; "and her kindneſs to me may be troubleſome to you. I will ſacrifice it to your eaſe." "Ah! too generous Caſtilian," cries the Duke, holding

me faſt in his arms, "how am I charmed with your ſentiments? What remorſe do they create in my mind! With what grief, with what ſhame do I remember the outrage you have received! The ſatisfaction I gave you in the king's cabinet, appears to me now to be too ſmall; I will make better reparation for the affront; and to blot out the infamy of it for ever, I offer you one of my nieces who is at my diſpoſal. She is a rich heireſs of fifteen years of age, and fairer ſtill than ſhe is young." I returned the Duke's compliments as reſpectfully as the honour he did me to receive me into his alliance deſerved. I married his niece a few days after. The whole court commended this lord for making the fortune of a young gentleman, whom he had covered with infamy: and my friends rejoiced with me, that an adventure, which might have ended ſo fatally, had ſuch an happy iſſue. Ever ſince that time, Gentlemen, I have lived very pleaſantly at Liſbon. I am beloved by my ſpouſe, and ſtill love her: the Duke of Almeyda is always giving me new tokens of his friendſhip, and I may ſay without boaſting, that I am ſtill well with the King of Portugal. The importance of my preſent journey to Madrid, aſſures me that I am ſtill in his eſteem.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

By what accident Gil Blas was obliged to look out for a new place.

THus did Don Pompeio finiſh his ſtory, which Don Alexio's valet and I hearkened to in an outer room, for they had taken care to diſmiſs us from theirs before he began it. We ſtaid behind the door, and liſtened ſo attentively, that we did not loſe a word. After this, theſe lords drank on; but they left off before morning, becauſe Pompeio was to be early with the prime miniſter, and deſired to have a little reſt. The Marquis de Zeneta and my maſter embraced that gentleman, bid him farewell, and left him with his kinſman.

We went to bed for this time before daylight; and when Don Matthias awoke, he gave me a new employment. "Gil Blas," ſays he, "take pen, ink, and paper, and write two or three words for me, which I will dictate to you. I make thee my ſecretary." "So," ſays I to myſelf, "this is a new buſineſs for me. As a lackey, I follow my maſter every where; as a valet de chambre, I dreſs him; and write for him as ſecretary. Heaven be praiſed, I am going, like the threefold Hecate, to act three different parts." "Thou doſt not know," continues my maſter, "what my deſign is, but be diſcreet, and I will tell thee; it is as much as thy life is worth to ſay any thing. As I meet every

day with perſons who boaſt of ladies favours; to give them as good as they bring, I will have counterfeit letters in my pocket, which I will pretend came from women, and read them to them. This will divert me, and make me happier than my fellows, who are at the pains to obtain conqueſts merely for the pleaſure of publiſhing them; whereas I will publiſh them, and be at no pains in obtaining them; but," added he, "ſo diſguiſe thy hand, that the billets may not appear to come all from one perſon."

I took pen, ink, and paper, made myſelf ready to obey Don Matthias's commands, and he dictated a billet to me in the following terms. "You was not laſt night at the place of aſſignation. Ah! Don Matthias, what can you ſay in your juſtification? How was I miſtaken! You have juſtly puniſhed me for believing that all the amuſements, all the buſineſs in the world, ſhould give way to the pleaſures of your ſeeing Donna Clara de Mendoza." This billet being done, he dictated another to me, as from a woman which had left a prince for him; and after this a third, from a lady, who told him if ſhe could be ſure he would be diſcreet, ſhe would take a voyage with him to the iſland of Venus. He not only cauſed me to write the letters, but to ſet the names of perſons of quality to them. I could not help telling him I thought that was too nice and perilous a matter; but he deſired me to give him advice only when he aſked it. I was forced to hold my tongue, and

and to follow his orders. This affair diſpatched, he roſe, and I helped to dreſs him. He put the letters in his pocket, went out; and I waited on him to Don Juan de Moncado, who that day treated five or ſix gentlemen his friends. There was plenty of all things, and of joy, which gives the beſt reliſh to them at all feſtivals. Every one of the gueſts contributed to keep up the converſation, ſome by witticiſms, others by ſtories of which they made themſelves always the heroes. My maſter did not loſe ſo fair an opportunity to value himſelf on the letters he had made me write; he read them out to the company, and with ſo confident an air, that every one but his ſecretary might have been deceived by it. Among the gentlemen to whom he read them, there was one named *Don Lopes de Velaſco*. This man, who was very grave, inſtead of doing like the reſt, and congratulating the reader on the favours he had received from thoſe ladies, demanded of him, ſullenly, if the conqueſt of Donna Clara came cheaply? "Very eaſily," replied Don Matthias; "ſhe made all the advances; ſhe met me in the walks; ſhe liked me, ſent after me, underſtood who I was, wrote me a billet, appointed me to come to her at ſuch an hour in the night, when all the family was abed but herſelf and her woman. I went to her houſe, was introduced to her apartment —— I muſt beg pardon if I ſay no more; it is not conſiſtent with diſcretion.

At this laconic recital, Signior de Velaſco

changed countenance; and it was plain he had an intereſt in the lady that was the ſubject of it. "All thoſe billets," ſays he to my maſter, caſting a furious look at him, "are counterfeited, and eſpecially that you boaſt to have received from Donna Clara de Mendoza: there is not a more reſerved lady in Spain: a gentleman every way equal to you in birth and merit, has courted her theſe two years, and has ſcarce been able to obtain the moſt innocent favours; and may flatter himſelf, that if ever ſhe granted any others, it would be to himſelf only." "How, Sir! do you ſay the contrary?" replies Don Matthias in a merry way. "I agree with you ſhe is a lady of nice honour. And I too am a man of nice honour: conſequently you ought to be ſatisfied that nothing but what was very honourable paſſed between us." Don Lopez interrupting him, ſaid, "This will not do, Sir; let us have none of your raillery: you are an impoſtor: Donna Clara never had an aſſignation with you by night: I cannot bear your injuring her reputation. I need not tell you any more." At theſe words, he broke up abruptly, and went away in a manner which ſhewed this affair would have ill conſequences. My maſter, who was brave enough for a man of his character, deſpiſed Don Lopez's threats. "What a coxcomb he is?" cried he, burſting out a-laughing; "knight-errants vindicate the beauty of their miſtreſſes; he will vindicate the virtue of his; which I think is much more extravagant."

Velaſco's

Velaſco's withdrawing, which Moncado in vain endeavoured to hinder, did not break up the company. The gentlemen took little notice of it, and went on carouſing till morning. By five o'clock my maſter and I were got to bed. I was very ſleepy, and made account to have a good long nap of it; but I reckoned without my hoſt, or rather without our porter, who awaked me an hour after, to tell me there was a youth demanded to ſpeak with me. "The duce take the porter," cried I, gaping; "doſt thou not know that I have not been in bed an hour? Tell the young man I am aſleep, and that he muſt call again." "He ſays he muſt needs ſpeak with you this minute," replied the porter. Upon which I got up, ſlipt on my coat and breeches, and went down, curſing the perſon whom I was going to. "Friend," ſays I, "be pleaſed to tell me what preſſing affair procures me the honour of ſeeing you ſo early." "I have a letter," anſwered he, "to give in to Don Matthias's own hand, and he muſt read it this inſtant, it is of that vaſt conſequence: I deſire you would introduce me to him." Believing it was a matter of importance, I took the liberty to wake my maſter. "Your pardon, Sir, for diſturbing your reſt," ſaid I; "but the importance"——"What wouldſt thou have with me?" cried he, interrupting me. "My Lord," ſays the young man who accompanied me, "I have a letter to deliver you from Lopez de Velaſco." Don Matthias took the billet, opened it; and having read it, ſaid to Don

Don Lopez's valet, "Child, I don't riſe before noon, whatever diverſion is propoſed to me to tempt me: think then, if I will riſe at ſix o'clock in the morning to fight. Tell thy maſter if he is at the ſame place at two o'clock, I will be with him. Go, carry him that anſwer." At theſe words he ſunk down in his bed, and fell aſleep again.

He roſe, and dreſſed himſelf very compoſedly between one and two o'clock, ſaying, when he went out, that I need not follow him. But I was too impatient to ſee what became of him, to obey his commands. I walked after him till I came to St Jerom's walks, where I perceived Don Velaſco ſtaid expecting him. They drew and fell to it immediately: the battle was long; they puſhed both with great vigour and dexterity. At laſt victory declared for Don Lopez: he ran my maſter through. Don Matthias fell, and Don Lopez fled, very well ſatisfied with the vengeance he had taken. I made what haſte I could to aſſiſt my maſter: I found him juſt departing. The ſight drew tears from me, and eſpecially when I conſidered that he had made me the inſtrument of his death. But, notwithſtanding my grief, I thought of what I had to do for my own intereſt on this occaſion. I returned home immediately, without ſaying any thing. I bundled up my cloaths and other goods; and I by miſtake put ſome of my maſter's among them. I carried the bundle to the barber's, and then reported about town the ſad accident of which I had been

been a witneſs. I told every body that would hear me, and did not fail to make a report of it to Rodriguez. He ſeemed to be leſs afflicted than ſtudious about the meaſures he was to take: he aſſembled Don Matthias's domeſtics, ordered them to follow him, and went with them to St Jerom's walks. We lifted our dying maſter up, and carried him home, for he breathed ſtill, but died two hours after. Thus periſhed Signior Don Matthias de Silva, for reading *mal à propos* ſome counterfeit billetdoux.

CHAP. IX.

What perſon he entered into the ſervice of, after the death of Don Matthias de Silva.

SOme days after the funeral of Don Matthias, his domeſtics were all paid off and diſmiſſed. I took up my quarters at my barber's, with whom I lived very friendly, and liked living there much better than at Melendez's. Having money in my pocket, I was not in haſte for a ſervice; beſides, it was not now every place that would pleaſe me. I would wait on no ordinary perſon, and reſolved to be very ſcrupulous in my choice of a maſter. I did not think the beſt too good for me; ſo favourable an opinion had I conceived of a young Lord's valet preferable to all others.

While I was waiting for a place equal to my merit, I thought I could not ſpend my time better than by paſſing ſome of my idle hours

hours with my fair Laura, whom I had not ſeen ever ſince we made the diſcovery of ourſelves. I durſt not dreſs myſelf like Don Cæſar de Ribera, nor, unleſs it was for a diſguiſe, put on that habit without paſſing for a madman; my cloaths were ſtill pretty freſh, and, by the barber's aſſiſtance, I adjuſted myſelf the middle way, between Don Cæſar and Gil Blas. Thus equipped, I went to Arſenia's houſe, where I found Laura in the ſame room we formerly met in, and by herſelf. "Is it you?" cried ſhe, as ſoon as ſhe ſaw me; "I thought you had been loſt; it is a week ago that you promiſed to ſee me; I perceive you are a man of your word, eſpecially with the ladies."

I excuſed myſelf on account of the death of my maſter, the affairs I had to do; and added very gallantly, that, in the midſt of all of them, the amiable Laura ran ſtill in my mind. "If it be ſo," replied ſhe, "I have no more reproaches to make you, and muſt own that I thought of you too. As ſoon as I heard of Don Matthias's misfortune, I formed a deſign that perhaps will not diſpleaſe you. I have heard my miſtreſs ſay often, that ſhe wanted a man to be a ſort of a ſteward, and keep an exact account of all the money given him for the expenſes of the houſe: I have caſt my eye on your Lordſhip: I fancy you may go through ſuch an employment well enough." "And I fancy," replied I, "I ſhould do it to a miracle; I have read the œconomiques of Ariſtotle; and for keeping accounts, it is my

my maſterpiece. But, child," continued I, "I have one ſcruple upon me concerning my ſerving Arſenia." "What ſcruple?" ſays Laura. "I have taken an oath," replied I, not to ſerve a citizen: nay, I have ſworn it by Styx. If Jupiter durſt not break that oath, judge you whether a valet may?" "What do you mean by a citizen?" cries the woman of Arſenia: "what do you take us players to be? Do you level us with the wives of mechanics or attorneys? Know, friend, that actreſſes are noble and archnoble, by the alliances they contract with great lords." "On this foot," ſay I, "I may accept the place you have cut out for me: I ſhall not demean myſelf." "No, no," replies ſhe, "to paſs from the ſervice of a beau, to that of a ſtage-heroine. It is ſtill the ſame world. We go cheek by jowl with people of quality: we have the ſame equipages; we live as well, and, in the main, act the ſame parts of life. Indeed, where is the difference between a marquis and a player, take them all the day long? If the marquis is three quarters of the day above the player by birth, the player for the other quarter is ſtill more above him by the part of emperor or king which he acts. This, methinks, is a compenſation for our want of nobility and grandeur, and equals us with the lords and ladies of the court." "Yes truly," replied I, "you are tallies one to another. I find players are not ſuch ſcoundrels as I took them for, and you have given me a great deſire to ſerve perſons of ſo much

much honour." "Come then," ſays ſhe, "two days hence; I need no more time to diſpoſe my miſtreſs to take thee; I will ſpeak in thy favour; and having an aſcendant over her, I am ſatisfied I ſhall ſucceed in it."

I thanked Laura for her good-will. I let her ſee that my gratitude would have no bounds, and aſſured her of it with tranſports which left her no room to doubt it. We had a long converſation; and it had been longer, if a footboy had not come, and told my princeſs that Arſenia wanted her. We then parted: I went home in ſweet hopes of an employ to my liking, and was punctual to Laura's appointment two days after. "I expected thee," ſaid Arſenia's waiting-woman, "to inform thee that thou art intendant of this houſehold. Follow me, I will preſent thee to my miſtreſs." At theſe words ſhe led me through an apartment conſiſting of five or ſix rooms within one another, all richly furniſhed.

What luxury, what magnificence! I thought myſelf in the houſe of a vice-queen, or rather, that I ſaw all the riches of the world heaped together in one place. True, there were the riches of ſeveral nations, and that apartment might be defined to be the temple of a goddeſs, where each traveller brings an offering of the rarities of his country. I ſaw the goddeſs ſitting on a ſatin couch; ſhe looked charming and plump with the fumes of the ſacrifices: ſhe was in a gallant deſhabille, and her fair hands were preparing a new head-dreſs for her to act her part in the next day.

day. "Madam," ſays her woman, "this is the ſteward I ſpoke of; I can aſſure you, you cannot have a better." Arſenia looked attentively upon me, and I had the good luck not to diſpleaſe her. "So, Laura," cries ſhe, "there's a pretty lad, and I doubt not but I ſhall like him. Child," added ſhe to me, "I receive you into my ſervice, and have only one word to ſay to you. You will have no reaſon to be diſſatisfied with me, if I have none to be ſo with you." I anſwered, "I would do my utmoſt to give her content." And perceiving we were agreed, I went for my cloaths, and took immediate poſſeſſion of my poſt in her houſe.

CHAP. X.

Which is not longer than the preceding one.

IT was near play-time. My miſtreſs bid me wait on her, with Laura, to the theatre. We entered her tiring-room, where ſhe took off her ordinary dreſs, and put on a more pompous one to play in. When the curtain was drawn, Laura took me with her to a place where we could ſee and hear the actors perfectly well. I did not like the greateſt part of them, occaſioned without doubt by what I heard Don Pompeio ſay to their prejudice. However, ſeveral of them were clapped, and ſome of thoſe put me in mind of the fable of the ſucking pig.

Laura told me the names of the actors and actreſſes, as they came upon the ſtage. She

not only named them, but with characters that were as diverting as they were malicious. "This actor," ſays ſhe, "is a blockhead, that a bully: that minx whom you ſee there, and who looks ſo ſmirkingly, is called *Roſarda*; the company has but a bad bargain in her, ſhe ought to be liſted in the band that is raiſing for the viceroy of Mexico, and to be ſuddenly ſhipped off: behold that bright ſtar advancing there, that ſetting ſun; it is Caſtilda; if ſhe had required a piece of marble out of every lover to build a pyramid, as did heretofore a princeſs of Egypt, ſhe might have raiſed one as high as the heavens." In fine, Laura railed at them all alike, the baggage ſpared not even her own miſtreſs. However, I muſt own my weakneſs. I was charmed with Laura, though her character was not morally good. She railed with a grace that made me in love even with her malice. She roſe between the acts to ſee if Arſenia wanted her; but, inſtead of coming to her place again, ſhe ſtaid chatting with the fellows behind the ſcenes. I followed her once to watch her, and obſerved ſhe had abundance of acquaintance. I reckoned three players that ſtopped her, one after another, to talk to her, and I ſaw they did it with great familiarity. I was not pleaſed with it, and it was then the firſt time of my life that I knew what jealouſy was; I went back to my place ſo thoughtful and ſad, that Laura perceived it as ſoon as ſhe returned. "What is the matter with thee, Gil Blas?" ſaid ſhe in a ſurpriſe. "What humour

humour has taken thee ſince I left thee? thou art melancholy and penſive." "It was not without reaſon, my princeſs," replied I, "your airs are a little too free. I ſaw you ſpeak to the players." "A fine reaſon for you to be melancholy!" ſaid ſhe, ſmiling: "does that trouble you? You muſt bear a great deal more, if you live among actors: you muſt learn our familiar ways: no jealouſy, child: jealous folks, in the comic world, paſs for fools. Indeed there are no ſuch creatures here: fathers, huſbands, brothers, uncles, couſins, are, with us, the eaſieſt perſons upon earth, and very often make their fortunes by it."

After having exhorted me to take umbrage at no body, and mind nothing I ſaw, ſhe declared I was the happy mortal who had found the way to her heart, aſſuring me ſhe would always love me, and me only. Upon this aſſurance, which I might have ſuſpected, without paſſing for a diſtruſtful perſon, I promiſed not to be alarmed; and I kept my word. I ſaw her that very moment talk and laugh with men. When the play was done, we returned home with our miſtreſs. Florimonda came thither ſoon after with three old lords, and a player, who were to ſup there. Beſides Laura and me, there were a cook, a coachman, and a footboy in the houſe: we joined all five to get the ſupper ready. The cook, who underſtood her buſineſs as well as Dame Jacinta, prepared the diſhes, the coachman aſſiſting her; the waiting-woman and the footboy laid the cloth; and I ſet out the buf-

ſet, where I placed ſeveral veſſels of ſilver and gold, and other offerings which the goddeſs had received. I furniſhed it alſo with bottles of different wine, and ſerved as butler, to ſhew my miſtreſs I was fit for any thing. I obſerved the looks of the players during the entertainment. They carried themſelves like ladies of importance: they imagined themſelves to be women of the firſt quality. Inſtead of giving the lords the title of *Excellency*, they gave them only that of *Lordſhip*, calling them plainly by their names. It is true, the lords themſelves ſpoiled them, by rendering them ſo familiar with them. The player, on his ſide, accuſtomed to act the hero, behaved himſelf with thoſe lords *ſans ceremonie*: he toaſted their healths, and one would have thought expected to have been toaſted in his turn.

Floridor, a vain empty fellow, who got his firſt name on the ſtage, by repreſenting a thing of as little wit and as much vanity as himſelf, a compoſition of levity and grimace; this ſame Floridor, from wearing a livery, is admitted to ſit down with gentlemen and perſons of condition, and even to call Ovid and Terence, two celebrated wits, his friends.

By the behaviour of my miſtreſs and Florimonda with the old lords, I thought to myſelf, what Laura told me, the marquis and the player were equal all day; ſhe might have added, they are much more ſo at night, which they ſpent together over their cups. Arſenia and Florimonda were naturally wanton; a thouſand bold touches eſcaped them in

in their diſcourſe, intermixed with ſmall favours and toyings, which were ſavoury things to thoſe old ſinners. While my miſtreſs was amuſing one of them with ſome innocent banter, her friend, who ſat between the two others, did not act the Suſanna. As I was conſidering this picture, which had but too many charms for a lad of my age, fruit was brought in. I then filled the table with bottles and glaſſes, and vaniſhed to ſup with Laura, who waited for me. "What doſt thou think of thoſe Lords," ſays ſhe, "Gil Blas?" "They are, doubtleſs," replied I, "adorers of Arſenia and Florimonda." "No," cried ſhe, "they are old lechers who viſit all coquettes alike, and engage with none in particular: they aſk but a little complacency of them, and are generous enough to pay well for the trifles that are granted them. Florimonda and my miſtreſs have no lovers at this time, I mean, no ſuch lovers as aſſume the authority of huſbands; and would have all the pleaſures of a houſe, becauſe they are at all the expenſe. As for me, I am glad of it, and maintain, that a coquette of ſenſe ought to avoid ſuch engagements. Why ſhould they ſuffer any one man to be their maſter? They had better leave meanly by getting a penny a time, than flouriſh on ſuch hard terms."

When Laura's tongue was once ſet a-going, it was not an eaſy matter to ſtop it. Words coſt her nothing. What a flux of language! She told me a hundred adventures that had happened to the actreſſes of the prince's com-

pany; and I concluded, from her diſcourſe, that I could not be better placed, to acquaint myſelf perfectly with vice. I was unhappily of an age when it does not ſtrike people with horrour; and the truth is, the baggage knew how to give ſuch colour to it, that nothing appeared but what was delicious. She had not time to tell me the tenth part of the exploits of the actreſſes, for we were but three hours together. The lords and the player retired with Florimonda, whom they ſaw home.

When they were gone, Arſenia putting ſome money into my hand, ſaid, "There, Gil Blas, are ten piſtoles for thee to go to market with. Five or ſix of our gentlemen and ladies dine here to-morrow, be ſure take care that we want for nothing." "With this money, Madam," replied I, I will engage to buy enough to entertain the whole *troop*." "Pray, friend," ſays ſhe, interrupting me, "correct your expreſſions. You muſt never ſay *troop*, but *company*. You call a parcel of banditti a *troop*: the ſame is the phraſe when you ſpeak of beggars and authors; but when you talk of players, you muſt always ſay a *company*, eſpecially if you are ſpeaking of the actors of Madrid, who very well deſerve to be called a *company*." I aſked my miſtreſs's pardon, for my making uſe of ſo diſreſpectful a term. I humbly entreated her to excuſe my ignorance, proteſting, that, for the future, whenever I ſpake of Meſſieurs the players of Madrid, in a collective manner, I would always ſay the *company*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

How the players live together, and after what manner they treat the authors.

NExt morning I went to market to exerciſe my employment of ſteward: it was a faſt-day, but by my miſtreſs's order I bought ſome good fat pullets, ſome rabbits, partridges, and other poultry. As Meſſieurs the players were not entirely ſatisfied with the manners of the church, they did not then exactly follow her commandments. I brought home as much proviſion as would have ſerved a dozen honeſt gentlemen for three days in carnival-time. The cook had work enough all the forenoon. While dinner was getting ready, Arſenia roſe, and was at her toilet till noon, when Signiors Roſimiro and Ricardo came. After them, arrived two actreſſes, Conſtantia and Celinaura, and a moment after Florimonda, accompanied with a man who had the air of a moſt foppiſh cavalier: his hair was tied behind with coloured ribands, his hat was cocked, and in it he wore a red feather: his fine ſhirt was ſhewn at his boſom; his gloves and his pocket-handkerchief hung at his ſword-hilt; and he wore his cloak with a grace peculiar to himſelf. Though he had a good mien, and was well-ſhaped, I immediately ſaw ſomething very ſingular in him. "This gentleman," ſaid I to myſelf, "muſt needs be an original." I was not deceived, his character was a moſt diſtinguiſhed one.

one. As ſoon as he entered Arſenia's apartment, he ran with open arms to the actors and actreſſes, and embraced them with more familiarity than the young beaux who aſſociated with my maſter made uſe of. I did not change my opinion when I heard him open his mouth; he dwelt upon every ſyllable, and pronounced his words in an emphatic tone, with looks and geſtures accommodated to the ſubject. I had the curioſity to aſk Laura who that cavalier was? "Thou mayſt well deſire to know," ſays ſhe; "it is impoſſible to ſee and hear him, and not be curious to know more of him; his name is *Signior Carlos Alonſo de la Ventoleria*; he was formerly a player, he left the ſtage out of humour, and has had ſufficient reaſon to repent it. Didſt thou take notice of his black hair? It is a borrowed teint, and ſo is that of his eyebrows and muſtachio; he is older than Saturn. But his parents having forgot to have him regiſtered when he was born, he takes advantage of their negligence, and ſays he is twenty good years younger than he really is; he is the fulleſt of himſelf of any man in Spain. He almoſt reached his fifteenth year before he could either write or read, and then he took a preceptor who taught him to ſpell in Greek and Latin. He has abundance of ſtories by heart, which he has told ſo often that at laſt he believes them; he outs with them in all companies; and one may ſay, that he frequently ſhiews his wit at the expenſe of his memory. It is ſaid he is a great actor; I muſt take other

people's

people's word for it, I confeſs I don't like him. I have heard him ſometimes rehearſe here, and among other defects, found he has an affected pronunciation, and a quivering voice that gives it an antic and ridiculous air."

Such was the picture that my doxy made of this honorary player; and indeed I never ſaw a man of a prouder aſpect; he affected to ſpeak finely, and did not fail to take out of his budget two or three ſtories, which he related with a ſtudied and impoſing air. On the other hand, the actors and actreſſes, who did not come there to hold their tongues, were not mute; they entertained themſelves with their abſent companions, after a moſt uncharitable manner; but that goes for nothing with players and authors. They made no conſcience of backbiting their neighbours. "You don't know, Ladies," ſays Roſimiro, "what our dear brother Ceſarino has done lately; he bought ſome ſilk ſtockings, ſome ribands and gloves, and had them brought this morning to the houſe by a little page, as if a counteſs had ſent them." "What deceit there is?" cries Signior de la Ventoleria, with the air of a coxcomb; "in my time people had more integrity, we did not think of putting ſuch tricks upon one another: It is true, the ladies took care to ſpare our invention, they often made us preſents." "'Sdeath," cries Ricardo, with as much vanity as the old player, "ſo they do ſtill. If it was permitted me to explain myſelf thereupon, I could ——But one muſt not tell certain adventures, eſpecially

eſpecially when perſons of rank are concerned in them."

"Pray, Gentlemen," cries Florimonda, interrupting them, "don't brag of ladies favours; all the world knows what ladies they are——let us talk of Iſmenia; it is ſaid the Lord who ſpent ſo much money upon her, has left her at laſt." "Yes," ſays Conſtantia, "and ſhe has loſt a tradeſman too, whom ſhe had almoſt ruined; I know the occaſion of it. Her Mercury ſerved her *qui pro quo*. He carried to the lord a letter ſhe wrote to the tradeſman, and gave the tradeſman the letter ſhe wrote to the lord." "Great loſſes theſe, my dear," replies Florimonda." "As for the lord," ſays Conſtantia, "he had run out his eſtate, but the tradeſman had ſtill ſomething left, and was worth keeping."

Such were the ſubjects they talked of before dinner; and while they were at table, I ſhould never have done if I went about to repeat all the ſcandal I heard. The reader will excuſe me for omitting it, to tell how a poor devil of an author, who came to Arſenia's when they had almoſt dined, was received.

Our footboy came and told my miſtreſs out aloud, that a man with foul linen, dirty ſhoes, and who, ſaving her preſence, looked like a poet, demanded to ſpeak with her. "Shew him in," replied Arſenia. "Don't ſtir, Gentlemen; it is only our author." So it was indeed, and one that had a play in the houſe. He brought my miſtreſs her part. His name was *Pedro de Moya*: when he entered the

the room, he made five or ſix low bows to the company, who took no manner of notice of him; only Arſenia nodded her head a little, in return for the compliments with which he overwhelmed her. He drew nearer to them, trembling, and in the utmoſt confuſion: he let fall his hat and gloves, took them up, and approached my miſtreſs to whom he preſented her part, with more reſpect than a lawyer gives a petition to a judge. "Be pleaſed to accept, Madam," ſays he, "the part I preſume to offer you." She took it after a cold and ſcornful manner, and did not condeſcend ſo much as to anſwer his compliments. This did not diſcourage our author, who took hold of the occaſion, to give another part to Roſimiro, and another to Florimonda, who treated him no more civilly than Arſenia had done. On the contrary, the player, as obliging as theſe gentlemen naturally are, inſulted him with the moſt picquant raillery. Pedro de Moya was ſenſible of it, but durſt not retort, for fear his play ſhould ſuffer. He retired without ſaying a word to them in anſwer; but, I could perceive, was mightily concerned at the reception he met with. I doubt not but he paſſed his cenſures on the players according to their deſerts; and the players, on the other hand, began, as ſoon as he was gone, to talk of the author with as much courteſy. "Methinks," ſays Florimonda, "Signior Pedro de Moya did not go away very well ſatisfied."

"Don't let that trouble you, Madam," cries Roſimiro, "are authors worth minding?

ing? If we ſuffered them to be equal with us, it would ſpoil them. I know thoſe poor creatures; I know them full well: they will preſently forget themſelves on the leaſt encouragement. Uſe them like ſlaves, and don't be afraid of tiring out their patience. If they leave you ſometimes in anger, their itch of writing will bring them back again, and it is enough for them that we will deign to act their plays." "Right," ſays Arſenia; "we never loſe our author, unleſs he has made his fortune; and as ſoon as that is done by our merit only, he grows lazy and writes no more. True, the company can do without them, and the public does not miſs them.

This diſcourſe was applauded by them all. As ill as the actors treat the authors, the latter have no help for it; and the players, by putting themſelves above them, ſhew what a contemptible opinion they have of them.

CHAP. XII.

Gil Blas took a fancy to the theatre. He gives himſelf up to the pleaſures of the ſtage, and in a little while grows weary of them.

OUR gueſts ſat at table till it was time to go to the theatre. I attended them thither, and ſaw the play again. I was ſo pleaſed with it, that I reſolved not to miſs a night. I never failed being there, and inſenſibly accuſtomed myſelf to the ways of the actors. How wonderful is the force of habit! I was particularly charmed with thoſe that uſed

ſed moſt rants and geſticulations. I was not ſingular in it. The beauty of the pieces touched me as much as the manner of repreſenting them; ſome of them put me into tranſports; and I liked thoſe beſt, where all the cardinals, or the twelve peers of France, were introduced. I got ſome parts of thoſe incomparable poems by heart: I remember I learned one entire play, called *The queen of flowers*, in two days. The Roſe, who was the Queen, had for her confident the Violet, and for her 'ſquire the Jeſſamin. I thought nothing finer than ſuch works; as that which, in my opinion, did a great deal of honour to the wit of our nation.

I was not contented with adorning my mind with the fine ſtrokes of theſe maſterpieces of the drama. I laboured to perfect my joys, and, in order to it, hearkened eagerly to whatever the players ſaid; if they commended a play, I eſteemed it; if they diſcommended, I deſpiſed it. I took it for granted, that they underſtood plays, as jewellers do diamonds. Nevertheleſs, Don Pedro de Moya's play had a great run, though they did not think it would have taken. However, I could not ſuſpect their judgment; I had rather conclude, that the public wanted common ſenſe, than queſtion the infallibility of the company. But I was aſſured by every one, that the plays which the players thought beſt of, had generally the worſt ſucceſs; and on the contrary, thoſe that they diſliked, were almoſt always received with applauſe. They told me they

hardly ever hit right, and gave me inſtances of a thouſand plays which ſucceeded quite contrary to their deciſions. I had need of theſe, and many more proofs, to give me an ill opinion of the excellence of their taſte.

I ſhall never forget what happened one day at the acting of a new play. The players thought it dull and tedious, nay, they imagined the audience would not hear it out: but they would venture, and played the firſt act, which was clapped, and the ſecond more than the firſt. "What a devil," ſays Roſinairo, "this play takes!" They then played the third act, which pleaſed more than the two former. "I cannot comprehend it," ſays Ricardo, "we concluded this play would be damned: and ſee how it is liked." —— "Gentlemen," cries a player that was by, with great plainneſs, "there are a thouſand witty ſtrokes in it, which we did not obſerve, and that is the reaſon of its taking."

I ever after looked upon the actors to be wretched judges, and gave them their due, in my ſentiments of their merit. They make good all the ridiculous things the world ſays of them. I have known actors and actreſſes ſpoiled by being clapped; and looking on themſelves as objects of admiration, they have thought they did a favour to the public when they played. I was ſhocked with their defects; but it was my misfortune to take delight in this way of living, and to plunge myſelf in debauchery. How could I help it? All their diſcourſe was pernicious to youth, and I ſaw nothing

nothing but what contributed to corrupt me. If I had known nothing of what paſſed at Caſtilda's, Conſtantia's, and the other actreſſes, our own houſe was enough to ruin all the young men in Madrid. It was frequented not only by old lords, but by young rakes, by heirs juſt come to their eſtates, by citizens and lawyers. The grave and the gay were confounded there, and every one welcome for his money.

Florimonda, who lived in a houſe in our neighbourhood, dined and ſupped every day with Arſenia. There was ſuch a friendſhip between them, that abundance of people were ſurpriſed at it. They wondered two coquettes could live ſo lovingly together, and doubted not but they would quarrel one time or other about a ſpark; in which they were miſtaken, they were hearty friends. Inſtead of being jealous of each other, as the reſt of the ſex are, they lived in common. They choſe to divide the ſpoils of men, rather than diſpute their ſighs.

Laura, following the example of thoſe two illuſtrious aſſociates, made the moſt of her young days. She had reaſon to tell me I ſhould ſee fine doings there. However, I was not jealous. I promiſed to imitate the company in that point: I diſſembled my ſentiments for ſome time, and was ſatisfied with aſking the names of the men whom I ſaw ſhe entertained in private. She always told me it was an uncle, or a couſin. She had, I found, a very numerous family, exceeding that of

King

King Priam. She did not content herſelf with uncles and couſins, ſhe converſed alſo with ſtrangers, and acted the widow of quality at the old woman's I have ſpoken of. In fine, Laura, to give a juſt and exact idea of her, was as young, as pretty, and as much a coquette as her miſtreſs, who had no other advantage of her, than that ſhe publicly diverted the public,

I was borne down by the torrent, for three weeks; I gave myſelf up to all manner of pleaſures: but I muſt own, that, in the midſt of them, I often felt that remorſe which came from my education, and embittered all my ſweets: debauchery could not triumph over that remorſe; on the contrary, it increaſed in proportion with it, and, by an effect of my natural diſpoſition, I began to conceive a horrour for the diſorder of the players lives. "Ah, wretch!" cried I to myſelf, "is it thus that thou anſwereſt the expectation of thy relations? Is it not enough to have deceived them in chuſing another profeſſion than that of a preceptor! Does thy ſervile condition hinder thy living like an honeſt man? Does it become thee to live with ſuch wicked people? Envy, choler, and avarice reigns every where among them. Modeſty is baniſhed by theſe: by thoſe, temperance and induſtry: all of them are proud and inſolent. In a word, I was reſolved to dwell no longer with ſuch abandoned ſinners.

The End of the FIRST VOLUME.